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Gedheed  
Of Man ..*

*By  
Neclei Mikalovich*

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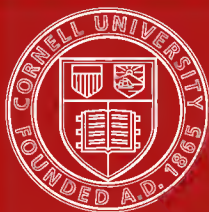
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# THE GODHOOD OF MAN

*And the Lord God said:  
"Behold, the man is become as one of us,  
to know good and evil."*

HIS RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE  
SOURCES OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

BY

NICOLAI MIKALOWITCH

*[Nicholas Michels]*



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## PREFACE.

We are fond of describing the present time as the age of progress; nor do we wholly lack justification for doing so, for science has indeed lifted the veil and showered the gifts of nature upon us in a steady flow. And yet we cling stubbornly to the hoary god-idea of antediluvian generations, and continue to nourish our children with the milk of false modes of thought.

Both church and state strive to sustain the mythological god-idea of primitive races in a desperate effort to prevent the image of the creator outgrowing their own stature. Misdirected reform movements hamper the inner growth of man, while utter insincerity permeates the whole organism of civilization.

But let one dare paint a truthful picture of history, lay bare the cancers of the present social order, and behold! the pharisees and scribes will perform the most ludicrous antics in a mad endeavor to smirch one's motives while glorifying their own acts by quotations from law and holy writ.

But do what they may, this glaring truth can never be erased from the tablet of the genius of time, that we have ceased to believe in dogmatic theology and should, therefore, no longer tolerate among us these prophets of a falsified christianity, if we pretend to be freemen and followers of the Nazarene.

No amelioration of the prevailing inequitable conditions will be possible, unless it be preceded by the overthrow of existing religious conceptions. When once the true god of nature shall have taken up his abode in the hearts of men, then will the false structure of state and society collapse and make room for the ideal state which becomes a people that has emerged from thralldom. To hasten the coming of that event must be left to honest men of science. For myself, I have endeavored, as far as in me lay, to expose the roots of the evil, and hope that the oppressed tiller of the soil and the slave of workshop and factory will thank me for so doing. Should I live to see the sun rise over a generation of men of these two classes who have ceased to be the common milch cow from which church and state draw sustenance and wealth I shall die content.

THE AUTHOR.

Chicago, February, 1899.

## CHAPTER I.

## HOW THE SPIRIT WAS MADE FLESH.

It was at dusk of day in the year 9981, when my companion and I, two weary wanderers, landed at the extreme slope of a lofty mountain range. The vanishing rays of the sun gilded the softly rustling tree-tops, as we sat down near the bank of a rippling stream, happy to find refreshment in its clear water after a tiresome journey.

In the bosom of smiling nature we could not resist a feeling of gladness in reflecting how uniformly happy the year found mankind on all the planets thus far visited by us. Now we were nearing our journey's end, and only the little Earth remained to be explored before we would again return to our own dear home.

Were we now on the verge of obtaining, at last, a glimpse into the fabled wonderland of the half-men? We had inquired about it diligently at all places touched in our long journey, but without discovering the least trace of it. And yet it is reported to have once existed, and we had been charged to find living remnants of it, if any remained among the planet-dwellers.

For it was set down in our ancient archives that in times long gone by intellectual dwarfs inhabited the

planets, who believed they were doomed to everlasting servitude for a single act of disobedience on the part of their remote forefathers. One of their principal doctrines, however, was that the planet inhabited by them was the only one bearing life, while all the other heavenly bodies were lights there placed by a personal deity to illuminate the one inhabited sphere. The abject fear of punishment which this god instilled into their hearts prevented them from ever knowing themselves. Our wise men had studied the Earth for many years and reached the conclusion, that the young age of that body indicated a scantily developed intellect among its human dwellers, if there were any. And we were now sent to continue that investigation on the planet itself.

Our minds occupied with such thoughts, we lay down to rest under a dense clump of trees, meaning to ascend the mountains in the freshness of dawn. Accordingly, the rising sun found us striding along vigorously. At the very moment we took a view of the landscape beyond from one of the many peaks, our senses were powerfully stirred by the panorama unrolled before our eyes.

The plain in front of us was full of life and light smoke was rising from many of the scattered cottages. What attracted our attention with a weird fascination was a tall spire surmounted by a cross. We heard the peal of bells and saw many of the inhabitants with measured tread moving toward the central point of the village. We started to descend the slope. Half-way down along the side of the road stood a tall

wooden cross, from which depended a human figure tinted white, above which appeared the legend:

“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

While at the foot we read:

“Jesus, pray for us miserable sinners.”

For a long time we gazed at the monument, seeking in vain to form a conjecture as to the period of human history to which it might belong.

Was it perhaps ——?

Nay, we could not believe it.

After taking the necessary notes, we proceeded toward the village, which now lay directly in front of us. To the right and left of us fields and meadows stretched far away to the adjoining hills and everywhere we observed hedges or heaped stone bowlders, marking off areas of greater or less extent. Barring the song of birds and the bleating of grazing flocks, profound silence hung over the landscape.

Now and then a solitary woman would peep timidly at us from behind the hedge surrounding her dwelling, only to disappear as quickly as she had come. We almost believed that we had come upon a half-deserted village, when there broke upon our ears, softly at first, then in a mighty peal, the swelling tones of music. Scarcely had we time to note the direction from whence it came, when suddenly, at a turn of the road, we stood upon the edge of an open square, at the extreme end of which rose the spire we had seen at a distance. It was part of a lofty structure.

Crossing the square, we approached the edifice, the architecture of which struck us as singular. Again we beheld a somewhat smaller cross over the main entrance, while surrounding it were figures of stone representing men and women of a world quite foreign to us. In the highly arched and colored windows were paintings whose allegorical meaning we were wholly unable to discover. Flocks of sheep and lambs, and doves hovering in mid-air, constituted a large part of what we saw. Our attention was held longest by the picture of a matron carrying in her arms a tender child, and riding on an ass, which was being lead by a bearded man of serious mien.

From the interior floated the sound of music and human voices mingled in song. We entered without further hesitation.

The lofty room was filled with men and women to the very entrance. Just in front of us a woman sprinkled herself with water, which she dipped from a hollow stone in the wall.

Far ahead of us a man of advanced age, and clad in strange attire, was performing ceremonies which we had never seen before, while the air was filled with song in unison with the invisible music.

We stood spellbound, and vainly tried to understand the lowly deportment of the multitude and the actions of the venerable-looking old man. Meaningless as it all seemed to us, every detail affected the audience with an overwhelming sense of significance. With humble reverence they followed every action of the old man, whose countenance displayed superior knowledge and dignity. We felt assured that



we were witnessing an act which to this people was of the greatest importance, and our conclusion was speedily confirmed when the venerable man left the place he had occupied and mounted a little elevation in the midst of the audience. The eyes of all were centered upon him when he began to read from a large volume the following passage:

"I am the lord, thy god, thou shalt have no other gods before me." Continuing, he explained that god created the whole world in six days, and how everything was good in the beginning. He created man after his own image and formed woman from a rib of the sleeping Adam. But by the disobedience of the first human couple, their entire posterity became subject to sin and death.

Mankind grew worse and worse, and God became more and more dissatisfied with his creation as time passed on, until at last he destroyed it all, with few exceptions, by an immense flood.

After the waters had subsided, he made a covenant with the survivors, which, however, was kept sacred only by few of them. Again the evil ones were scattered by him over the earth, and only with one pious man did he renew his covenant.

To his children he promised the land flowing with milk and honey, and after many wanderings and trials they took possession of it. But again and again even these favorite children violated his law and were, therefore, visited by him with severe penalties.

Driven from the promised land and held in servitude by barbarians, they finally acknowledged him their true god, and lamented their self-incurred misery.

At last the lord took pity on them and led them home from captivity. He promised them a messiah who would restore them to power and grace.

In fulfillment of this promise, god sent his only begotten son down upon the earth in human form. Born of a virgin, he appeared among the children of men, preaching peace. But they knew him not and condemned his doctrine. At last the wealthy in the land, together with the priests and scribes, succeeded in having him condemned and crucified by the authorities, for inciting the people to rebellion.

Thus the son of god himself was made a victim of sinful humanity. Nevertheless, the evil ones only did that which the spirit of god had resolved from eternity. Thus the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled, and the salvation of man was brought about.

But the son of god arose from the grave and ascended to heaven, where he sits on the right hand of the father, to reward the good and punish the wicked. The speaker also insisted that the mysteries of the true faith were preserved intact only in the church which he represented, and that all who believed otherwise were heretics and damned forever.

In conclusion, he admonished the poor to be content, the rich to be kind, and all without exception to remain obedient to the powers that be, and faithful to the church, if they would obtain mercy in the eyes of god.

Thus concluded the singular ceremony, and the faithful poured forth from the house of god, which we also left in order to exchange our impressions while standing at the entrance.

What was the meaning of all we had seen?

Could these men be the remnants of the old priest-made faith, which had been extinct on Mars for nigh two thousand years?

We racked our brains for an answer, and finally decided to ask an explanation from the old man. Just at that moment he appeared, leaning upon a knotted stick, and bowing, we greeted him respectfully. "Blessed be our lord, Jesus Christ," he answered, in returning our greeting, and, scanning us attentively, he said, gently: "I am the priest of this people and answer for them. What is it that leads you strangers to us?"

My companion, the learned AlGeber, the one to whom we owe the system of interplanetary communication, answered: "Venerable man, you are quite right in calling us strangers. On our part, we also feel very strange here, for that which we have so far seen of your people has been relegated by our wise men among the legends of the half-men, and we are undecided whether to feel glad that they are founded in truth.

"Know, then, that we are emissaries of the Interplanetary Society of Mars, your neighbor, and have been for some years traveling through the universe in order to carry information concerning the progress of the god-man to the friends of science.

"Wherever we have been, up to this time, the new seed has borne splendid fruit. But your teachings we have never heard until this day. Therefore, pray, make us acquainted with the uses and development of your science and religion, that we may make truthful report of it at home."

The old priest gazed at us long and searchingly, and with difficulty mastered his emotion, then he began to speak: "It has reached my ears, also, that many things have changed in the world. But we go on living according to the law of god, and are accustomed to reject everything new as heathen. It is true, the good old times have gone forever. I know it perfectly well, and yet cannot bring myself to preach to my simple people a new faith, new customs and another god. We, therefore, cling to the old order and are happy in so doing.

"Even I cannot believe, as yet, that the stars which illuminate our nights, are peopled with human beings. And I feel by the pressure of your hands that you are flesh and blood like ourselves, only you look somewhat loftier, and the light of your eyes is undimmed. But whencesoever you may come, if your visit to us is made with friendly intent, I welcome you. Bear me company at my simple noonday meal, and I venture to say we shall come nearer the truth by a free exchange of opinions."

We gladly accepted the offer and followed the priest, who as we went along was greeted with reverence by the villagers, and invariably gave the same greeting in return. The parsonage lay in a beautiful garden at the southern end of the village, and in order to reach it we had to step across a little stream in whose clear water nimble trout were bathing in the sun. A gaily colored water fowl was haughtily hopping from stone to stone in the midst of the stream, and high above us in the air a lark was thrilling its fairest song.

Pointing upward, the old man turned to us and said: "Yea, my friends, even the little birds praise the lord, our god, as we have just been doing. For this is Sunday upon the earth, when all true believers among men put on their best raiment and go to church. You were fortunate in being allowed to attend our most sacred function, the bloodless sacrifice of the mass. But I keep forgetting that you are from Mars and, therefore, probably a good part heathen." Concluding his words, he laughed good-naturedly, and we followed him silently through the garden and into the house. He showed us into a large reception room filled with big volumes, and excused himself for a short time. We sat there and with much curiosity looked at the books whose contents might be of so much importance to us. We saw in solid ranks, like soldiers before battle, the holy bible, the office of the apostles, the fathers of the church, the infallibility of the pope of Rome, the mystery of the holy trinity, prayer and hymn books. The theological works overshadowed the scientific as the oak tree the mustard seed.

What could be the god of these men that they devoted so many books to him? According to all that we had heard, he possessed all the good and bad qualities of the half-men, and had a son, whom he sent down among men to wipe out their sins, only to witness that his own creatures crucified him as one who incited the people to rebellion.

And yet, he not only knew in advance that all this would happen, but himself thus ordained it from eternity! What contradictions, to be thus brought together! What nonsense, to become established creed!

The more we reflected about it, the more distinct became our conviction that we had at last found the greatest of the lost treasures of the half-men. All these books treated of their god and we were in the midst of them! Our reflections were cut short by the reappearance of our host. He seemed to have guessed our thoughts, for, pointing to the folios, he observed: "Yes, those are my books. If you desire to become acquainted with the great christian god of the Earth, you will find him there. I shall gladly guide your work, for the ways of the lord are wonderful and past finding out." So saying, he asked us to follow him to the table. The meal being finished, he led us back among his books. "Ask, and ye shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. My friends, take from this treasure chamber as much as you will, you can never empty it, for the truth subsists from eternity and will never run dry." With these words he handed to the venerable AlGeber the book of books, as he called it. It was the holy bible. Then he took his leave with the remark that he must attend to his priestly duties and would give us answer later on.

We opened the book, and were astonished to find in it a minute account of the creation, as it had taken place according to the theory of the half-men. We there read, for a fact, that a god had created the world in six days.

We also had similar reports at home, but they had been branded by our science as untrue and mythical. We, therefore, scarcely believed our eyes when we found that we had here, close to us, living remnants of

the half-men. But there was no doubt about it. Here we had an opportunity, by observing the extant specimens, to investigate thoroughly the gradual growth of man up to his present ideal position in the universe, and to submit to the doubters clear proofs of the truth of our science. For we were convinced that there was opened to us here the nursery of the human race. According to their belief, as laid down in this book, the all-creating spirit moved idly upon the face of the waters and darkness was upon the earth, which was without form. A simple word dispelled the darkness. At this moment the floating spirit of god takes form and begins his work, like the potter in his workshop, utilizing the means at his disposal. Slowly he divides light, air, water, and earth, and puts each of these elements in its appointed place. Then he finds a footing on the created mainland, and everything takes perfect form piece by piece. Turning to the water, he commands it to bring forth plants and living beings.

Turning to the earth, he causes plants and beasts to take being thereon. With his own hands he hangs the sun, the moon and the stars in the firmament to light up the day and illuminate the night. And at last he performs the crowning act of creation. Man is created, whom he makes, as it were, ruler of the whole world. Looking at his work, he is pleased to find that all is good. Then he rests on the seventh day. But hold! The very next day it occurs to him that for his own delectation and as a test for man, he forgot a beautiful garden. He at once creates it and takes possession in company with Adam.

Then he has his animals promenade up and down in

front of the man, and Adam is delighted at the sight as a little boy, and gives a name to each of them. The creator had believed that Adam would select one of the animals for his playmate, and is chagrined to see that none of them suits the man. Again he is obliged to supplement his work, and thus is made the masterpiece of creation, woman. At sight of the charming Eve, Adam forgets the pilfered rib, for at last he has a wife. Only after these amendments was creation perfect and fully rounded out according to the eternal architect. At least, he did no more work thereafter. At most, he would walk in the coolness of the garden and they only heard his voice from time to time.

But soon after follows the fall, and the damnation of the human beings, who, by eating the forbidden fruit, have become as gods and like them know good and evil.

Thus the world at once becomes sinful, and man needs raiment to hide his nakedness. At first, man and wife sew together some fig leaves and hang them around their waists for aprons, but the generous god pulls the skins from some animals and makes clothes for them. Thus they are sent forth into the world, condemned to earn their bread in the sweat of their brows. Their descendants did likewise, and carried on trade and commerce.

From this time on, the greatest horrors are perpetrated with the permission of god. Lying and fornication, murder and theft, are engaged in everlasting struggle with the good. Full of wrath, the lord sees that nothing is left to him but to destroy his creatures. In all this hive of peoples he finds only eight persons



that are worth preserving. -And then comes the deluge.

Noah, having been saved from destruction, begins life again on the dry land. But soon the old fight begins anew, and god is obliged to confound the tongues of the arrogant and to scatter the wicked over all the earth. No doubt, his intention was to prevent fresh wickedness. But if so, he made a grievous mistake. Once again, he picks out a man from his creation and renews his old covenant with him. And again the consequences are the same. Promises and threats fill all his days, while among men obedience and unfaithfulness play an alternating game. So says the book. At this moment the venerable host enters the room and sits down near us with the satisfied smile of one who is sure of his case.

"Well, my friends from Mars, you have no such book in your libraries, have you? Every word the pure truth, and the breath of god in every line! There you find his omnipotence, mercy and justice coupled equally with his wisdom, and we stand amazed, when we reflect how merciful he was to our forefathers. Yes, this is our god, and yours also, about whom you heard so much this morning. No wonder he detests strange gods.

"How miserable are the figures of the heathen gods by the side of him! Not one of them survived his people! Like the proud Greeks and Romans themselves, their deities also were doomed to perish. They were dispelled by the truth as the mist is scattered by the sun. It is true, we, too, have some so-called scientists who deny god and assert that everything proceeded in a nat-

ural way. But, thank god! they are few, and we tolerate them among us, and pray for them. My dear friends, learn to know the great god aright, and you will prostrate yourselves at his feet in humility and understand all the smallness of human knowledge. Fortify yourselves in the faith, and seek not in vain to lay bare the works of god. For without his will you can do nothing, and he has counted the hairs upon your heads.

"But I see the wise AlGeber wants to reply. Proceed, for I am eager to hear your opinion. Tell me if your god is as sublime as ours, for you, like ourselves, must have heard his voice and preserved his word from remote antiquity."

Our worthy host concluded, and my companion began as follows: "Venerable man, as the weight of years has bleached your hair, so thousands of seasons have matured the human race and modified its nature and that of its deity. We are no longer the children of god, but have become his equals. As you observed very properly, you can do nothing without the will of your god. We are subject to the same influence, but our god is grander and better than yours. For your god is the child of your mind and, like that mind, remains small and petty. Our god is as great as the universe, and yet contained complete in each one of us. As the strength of the individual corresponds to his faculties and the structure of his body, so does omnipotence accommodate itself to the structure of creation and is neither greater nor in character different from it. Your god spent six days building the world and did nothing more. Our god is everlastingly building and destroy-

ing and his creative activity knows no end. Your creed is based upon fear of omnipotence. We have not only fathomed and measured this power, but have made it our servant. And as you, in accordance with this state of your knowledge, speak of how god was made flesh, so we speak of how man became divine, and of the plain laws of nature, to which we cling closely, and into which we merge completely at last.

"Our god is the god of equality. He makes no covenants with favorites, for there are none such, since we have eaten of the fruit from the tree of knowledge and have tried our strength. The fear of the powers of darkness has made way to knowledge of the laws of nature. But where we *know* you still *believe* and *conjecture*.

"Dear friend, the universe is no longer a riddle, and what you still wonder at has long been buried by us. If your god counts the hairs upon your heads, we have counted his own, nor did we find them innumerable. Thus we have quenched the fire of his wrath and taken from him the thunder of omnipotence. Since that time the evil of ignorance has made room to the knowledge of the good. And if your god scattered the wicked over the earth with their wickedness, the god-men have rooted out the thistles and burned the weeds. Hence, we harvest none but good fruit, the surplus of which we shall leave to posterity, as a bequest of those who witnessed the new-born godhood of man.

"Inasmuch as we recognize no masters, neither have we any slaves, and since we abolished hell, each one seeks and finds heaven in himself. And what your report only hints at we have fully realized, and are be-

come the lords of creation. Everything is subject to us, and yet we are not ambitious of power, for by mastering the universe we master ourselves.

The priest replied:

"When I listen to you I am inclined to believe that you were sent to tempt me. But your candid manner reassures me that you speak as your heart feels. But tell me why you so frequently mention the half-men? Who are they, and by what marks do you know them? Surely you do not count me and my people among them, for, if you do, let me tell you that millions of children of the earth live and think as we do. Follow the setting sun as far as you will, and you can easily count the like of yourself on this god's footstool."

AlGeber returned: "Half-men are those who have not yet reached a state of knowledge of themselves and, consequently, seek good and evil outside of their own nature, as you do. They are easily known by their creed, as the tree is known and valued by its fruit.

"All we know about them up to the present we owe to the writings left by our wise men from the beginning of the present era and from subsequent excavations on our planet. To judge by all these indications, the mind of the half-man was but poorly developed. He persisted in looking upon the world as a miracle, and believed more than he knew. We, too, had such a period on our planet, but it lies so far back that we are no longer able, at this day, to find any living remnants of it. This prompts us the more diligently to study your earth, and to enrich our science

with the knowledge thus acquired. For we believe less, but study and understand more than you do.

"But here, also, man has become greater and nobler, and knowledge is progressing with mighty strides. We are already looking forward to the time when our wise men will carry the doctrines of the god-man to your children on well-prepared soil. Already the harvest is ripe, but the harvesters are lacking. The scientists, however, of whom you speak so slightly, are our best friends, for they have learned to know themselves and will serve as shining examples to the future.

"They are the ones whom our wise men have watched for years and years with increasing admiration, as with the feeble implements of your science they tried to break through the vapors which envelop your minds, without attaining the aim which is within our grasp.

"Know that for centuries past we have watched your petty doings, and sought ways and means to communicate with you, in order to plant on this planet the doctrine of the divinity of man. And, since we are here, let us take for our watchword: 'Either convert us to your faith, or follow our knowledge.'"

AlGeber uttered the challenge, but the old man remained silent. He seemed lost in profound contemplation and only sighed from time to time. Leaving him to his thoughts, we picked up the remarkable book once more, but did not increase our knowledge by reading it.

Nothing but bitter struggles and everlasting favoritism coupled with total neglect of the rest of creation. Almost every page dripped with blood and

reeked with vileness, and only at long intervals did we meet a refreshing figure in this intellectual desert. But even these righteous ones were tormented by god from time to time most cruelly under pretense of trying them, whereas the crafty villain who by stealth, obtained a brother's patrimony was not only blessed by him but appointed father of his chosen people.

In all respects the deity wore the chosen garment of the half-men. As they thought, so must he think. Their actions were his actions, and they tried to divine his wishes. If they had erred, his wrath was aroused and he swore vengeance, only to melt in kindness and pardon the greatest crimes after his omnipotence was once more recognized. They were then once more his good children and he their beloved father. At such times he commanded them to kill their enemies and all their cattle, and scolded them if the oxen remained alive. He generally finished the horrors committed by them. Whenever they heard his voice, creation resounded with the wails of the vanquished, and the earth reeked with the blood of the innocent. They alone were his favorites, and he their only god, until they turned their love to another and stronger one, which frequently happened.

We laid the book aside and looked at each other in amazement. This, then, was the god of the half-men. Such a depth of degradation we were not prepared to find. If the father proceeded in such manner with his creation, what could we expect of the son? Just then the old man awoke from his reveries and said: "If you have finished, my wise AlGeber, I will take the liberty to remark that I also frequently

thought as you do, but I looked upon it all as a seductive inspiration of the devil and shook off the thought from my mind, cast myself at the feet of my god, full of contrition, and ceased to delve further in the matter.

"But I forgive you, for you cannot yet comprehend the justice of god and how he was offended by sinful man before his benevolence turned to eternal wrath. Only if you bear this in mind and are prepared to receive the book in that spirit, will you be able to understand it, and heaven will be opened to you. For our god takes more joy in the return of a repentant sinner than in ninety-nine righteous ones."

With a smile AlGeber replied: "The book which you gave me to read is not the work of god, as you think, but emanated entirely and exclusively from the hand of man. To me, therefore, it is proof only of what conception the people in whose period it originated, had of their god. And if you would speak accurately, do not say any more about a god who created us all, but of the one that we have formed and fashioned for ourselves. For just as the god-idea differed among all nations according to the age and conditions under which they lived, in like manner the individual carries his own god within him, and that god cannot be greater or more perfect than is permitted by the limited nature of the individual. And furthermore, as your god did not create all men equally good or wicked, so you will never succeed in preaching the same faith to all peoples. For each individual ever holds his own god highest and best.

"You speak of his justice and mercy, but you do

not give me a single example! And I have not yet found the least trace of such qualities in your holy bible. Your god remains to me at present the prime source of all evil. His justice is inhuman cruelty, and his mercy might better be called criminal indulgence. His omnipotence becomes impotence in all his works. Your mistake is that you seek your god outside of the universe and, hence, you find neither him nor satisfaction in yourselves.

"To show you the difference between your thought and ours, let me state that we hold the following as our law: 'I am the lord, my god, and suffer no strange gods beside me which are not in accord with my nature.'

"Thus we remain true to ourselves and are able to guard our rights and duties against everyone. For as one thinks, so think all the others.

"As dripping water gradually hollows out the stone, imperceptibly to the mind of man within life's short span, thus we come and go in nature's peaceful workshop, well knowing that our deeds will incite the coming man to still greater achievements. And as with us, so with all things. The almighty net of nature retains the creature in its particular form only for a short period, and transforms all things at the appointed time in the ever moving whirl of development, for creation is everlasting and continuous.

"This knowledge elevates us and creates a temporal paradise in which we exist unconscious of our present form, in order to continually supply our ever active mother with the material for renewing her creations. To-day, nature has reached its aim in the



god-man. To-morrow, it will transmit him to the coming ones in a more perfect form for still further development. And while the past is not wholly without influence in shaping the future, it is the spirit of the present age which creates and bequeaths the latest images to the coming generation. Know that nature produces nothing new, unless it uses the old as its material. Mind and matter are ever the same; only the created forms differ and produce different effects. The same sap which gives life to the tree also serves man, as both must necessarily expel the waste elements to make new life possible."

So far AlGeber.

The old man's eyes sparkled while he listened, and, now rising from his seat so that he seemed to grow before our very eyes, he replied:

"You have called down my god to convert you. Harken, then, to the answer of his servant! Very well, so be it! And my prayer shall be this, that I may succeed in disentangling you from the wiles of the devil, and to lead you as penitent lambs into the bosom of our holy church.

"I shall willingly listen to your objections and try to profit by what is good in your science. For there is no knowledge but that which emanates from god and augments his glory.

"Listen, then, to what we hold fast as the leading principle of our lives.

"We believe in and worship a triune god of infinite perfection. He is a pure and simple spirit, eternal, immutable, omnipresent, and without end. In his actions he is omniscient, free, omnipotent, and holy,

and, hence also, wise, good and just. Thus he is the grandest, highest and most lovable good from which all other goods spring as from an inexhaustible fountain.

"This triune god, in the beginning of time, created all that is outside of him in perfect freedom, for his own glory, out of nothing, and all was good.

"This doctrine of the creation of the world stands at the head of our creed and cannot be denied without shaking the whole edifice of our religion."

Scarcely had the last words dropped from the lips of the priest before AlGeber began:

"If in your doctrine everything springs from god, is it not a contradiction to say that he created the world out of nothing? If he is all, then there is nothing outside of him. If he ceases to be all, he cannot remain your god."

Shaking his finger and smiling with an air of conscious superiority, the priest replied:

"You are just like our own scientists, in whose minds god and the world are confounded. You try to strip god of his divinity and to invest the world with that attribute, and yet you only misunderstand our doctrine. Bear in mind that he is almighty and for that reason alone is capable of making something out of nothing. Of course that is as incomprehensible to the feeble mind of man as creation itself. Hence, nothing is left for us but to believe."

"If he did not create the world out of himself and at the same time there was nothing outside of him, how, then, did it come into being at all? Even though he created it out of nothing, he still remains the only

responsible creator, since he produced the requisite material," answered AlGeber.

"Yes, he is really responsible in a way," the priest continued reflectively, "for he created the world in perfect freedom. There was nothing on the outside to urge him to it, for the reason that nothing existed outside of him, and, being an infinitely perfect being, he did not require anything outside of himself."

"Well, then," answered AlGeber, "why did he create it at all if his perfection did not require it? And what was he doing before he created the world?"

"There, now," said the priest, "that is another thing that you don't understand, as there are so many things which you scientists cannot comprehend. Although not acting externally, god, nevertheless, is active within himself without end; he occupies himself in the contemplation of his own perfection, forever knowing, loving and rejoicing in himself."

Laughing aloud at the termination of the good priest's arguments, AlGeber said: "At last you are coming to the point. At the moment when he ceased to have pleasure in himself, he made man in his own image. When he began to feel lonesome he made himself company. But what becomes of his immutability in the light of these reflections?"

But the equanimity of the amiable man was not to be disturbed. He replied:

"Although the world had its origin within time, yet the resolution of god that it should be never had a beginning. This eternal resolution was sufficient to cause it to take being at the particular time when he willed it so. Within him nothing has a beginning,

but by his resolution everything *outside* of him *has*."

"How can there be anything outside of him, if he is all-present and without end?" my companion persisted, "for there is no room for anything else if he is what you believe.

"Moreover, if it was his resolution from eternity that all things should be, then your account of the six days' work seems wrong to me. The resolution could not have waited so long for realization unless it lacked omnipotence. It almost seems to me as if you were serving up our doctrine of evolution to the faithful in a little different form.

"You assume like ourselves an almighty will out of which all things took being within time, by eternal resolution. And since there was nothing outside of him and he is goodness himself, it follows necessarily that all emanations from him must be good. Hence, the world is just like him—good. That is your doctrine, is it not?"

The good man was becoming uneasy while AlGeber spoke, but he answered without hesitation:

"Yes, you are right. God created all things good, because he cannot produce anything evil. Unfortunately, all things did not remain good. But it does not follow that he could not have created things better. He was also at liberty to create more than he did, for, being omnipotent, he has the power to create all that he can will, even though he does not actually will or create it.

"That is just another of the foolish notions of the scientists. They are reaching out for something with which to belittle him, and all they accomplish is to

smash their own little heads in contact with his omnipotence. If they are unable to drag him down to their level, they crawl around on him and proclaim they are gods themselves. Crawling insects they are, and a veritable plague of them! At last they shout at the top of their voices there is no god, because they themselves are only human. Out upon this age of infidelity! And you from Mars also seem to have been infected by these heresies."

The old man was blustering and flourishing his knotted stick in the air with great energy. We were unable to imagine what had caused his excitement, and AlGeber tried with soft words to induce him to continue the discussion.

"And where is the wisdom of god?" he began slowly. "For if he was able to make all things better, why did he not do so?"

"Being the prime cause of all things, he knew the consequences that would arise, if he is a rational creator; or else he did not know them, and then his wisdom is at an end. You say that he can do all that he can will; the only thing he cannot do is the evil because he will not. Nevertheless, it is here. Who made it? We know only one creator so far. Did you discover another? You say your god is omnipresent and without end, hence the evil must also be contained within him if there really is any evil."

The priest was nettled when he said: "Of course, he knew the consequences, for he is a rational creator. But how could he tell that man would transgress an insignificant command and thereby alter his divine destiny by his own power?"

"The evil, however, comes from the devil, and he was at one time a good spirit, created by god before man."

Taking him back slowly to what he had just said, AlGeber replied: "If he did not know this, how do you reconcile that with his omniscience? But if he did know it and nevertheless willed it, he is, forsooth, a vile god. Did you not also say that he made everything in absolute freedom and, hence, is responsible for his works?

"And now you say, the evil is of the devil, and he was before man. How do you reconcile that with your teaching that god created all things in the beginning of time, and that all was good? It seems to me that you are becoming more and more involved in contradictions.

"If everything took being out of him and was good, whence do you get your devil? On the other hand, if the devil was before man, what becomes of the omnipotence and wisdom of your god?

A singular god who, after having bad luck with one creation, immediately brings forth one that is worse!

"Another point. If, as you say, he created the world for his own glory, how came it that man, brought forth from this eternal resolution, was able to oppose himself to god's laudable enterprise? Unless you deny reason to your creator, the cause of all creation must necessarily be responsible for all that was created, since the effect springs from the cause. On the other hand, if at the creation and of his own accord he transferred part of his omnipotence to man, he at

once ceased to be the old god. Being himself the highest good, he could transfer only that which he himself had, and so all creatures must remain similar to him.

"How can evil spring from a good source? You say yourself he is holy and, therefore, just. But where is his holiness if the creation which proceeded from him alone was able to darken the fountain? In this case the evil must have lain in the fountain itself.

"We are thus face to face with a peculiar problem.

"Your god is omnipotent, but does not put down evil because he cannot.

"He is without end, and yet shares his bed with the devil.

"Notwithstanding his wisdom, he was unsuccessful in the second creation as well as in the first.

"He created all things for his glory, and yet endowed man with all that brings disgrace.

"How can we get anything profitable out of this maze of contradictions unless we rob Peter to pay Paul?"

Quick as a flash the priest pounced upon my companion in tones of thunder: "What! You claim to have compassed all wisdom and yet do not know that he endowed man with free will? You wiseacres from Mars are still far behind in divine science."

In a gentle voice AlGeber replied: "Now you say yourself that he did so and thereby deny completely the perfection of your god. For how could the will which emanated from him be freer or in any way other than he himself desired, unless your god is not omnip-

otent? How could this free will of man strive against him if he is the rational cause of all that was created?

"By making such an assertion you deny a perfect, reasonable god. On the other hand, if you deny that the human will is independent of the divine, then the divine will still remains the sole cause of creation and its responsible creator. And inasmuch as god is the highest good it is impossible that man became bad out of him.

"In my opinion, your confession of faith ought to read about as follows:

" 'We believe in an eternal god, who, in the course of time, became satiated with his own perfection and ceased to love himself. Being from eternity pregnant with a plan of creation, he made the world, in a fit of fickle caprice, in six days, in so imperfect a manner that he soon saw that the creation of man had not only deprived him of much of his omnipotence, but that man, by the free will bestowed upon him, had weakened the divine will so materially that it was no longer able to overcome the contrary currents of the human will.

" 'Full of chagrin and wrath, he looked down upon his abortive work, well knowing that by the creation of man he had soiled the eternal fountain of good and snirched his own fingers without wanting to do so. Being himself good by nature, he saved the residue of his omnipotence by turning his face away from man and leaving him to the power of evil of which he was himself incapable.' "

"Stop your blasphemous talk," now cried the old man, with rising anger, "for neither you nor I can



fathom his mysteries, since we are only weak mortals. Faith is the only thing left to us. With all your subtleties, even you cannot deny a god."

"Neither do I intend to do so," answered AlGeber. "But pray explain to me your god who is three in one, which I confess is really beyond my comprehension."

"That is the greatest mystery of our religion," the priest retorted in a mollified tone, "which it is impossible for us to shake. For here our understanding comes to a full stop. Did you ever see a milking stool with three legs, such as our farm hands use in milking cows? Three legs and one chair—three persons and one god. That is the best explanation I can give you. But whenever I see a farm hand with a chair in one hand and a milk pail in the other going to the barn, it reminds me of the holy trinity."

At the same time he winked at us piously and devoutly as if to say, "Do you understand it now?" We laughed aloud while he opened the door of the house.

At the supper table he was once more the most amiable host and seasoned the meal with many a story of country life. "We are not fond of becoming heated over such matters," he smilingly said. "It agrees much better with us simply to believe. I made an exception with you to-day because you desired it. To-morrow forenoon I shall attend to my duties outside. In the meantime look at my people and my books more closely and try to become better acquainted with us. And even though our god does not suit you, I hope you will at least remember me kindly. Live and let live, is the principle on which to get along best. So, for better acquaintance, to-morrow afternoon in the garden! And now, good-night!"

## CHAPTER II.

## HOW GOD WAS MADE FLESH.

"If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear!" the worthy old priest called out to us after seating himself on a shaded bench.

We had been following him through the winding pathways of the garden and were wondering at the new life that seemed to have taken possession of him. He flourished his stick like an active youth, knocking down a bunch of leaves in one place, pulling out the ripening fruit from under the boughs and vines, and contemplating it with the joy of a planter.

Taking the offered seats, we waited for him to speak. Looking at us out of his happy eyes, he asked: "Have you such beautiful gardens on Mars? It has always been a pleasure to me to observe the life sprouting out into buds and flowers at the approach of spring. And when the sweet fruit delights the eye and refreshes the mouth, I am loath to part with summer. But autumn comes every year and robs my beautiful garden of its beauties. When the leaves turn yellow I feel sad and think of how perishable are all the things of this world. But hope of the coming year revives and encourages me. Like the flowers and leaves, man also decays, only to blossom once more beyond the grave in everlasting life.

"And I suppose that the almighty in his wisdom arranged things similarly with you as he did with us, if you really are from Mars. I had intended to ask how you managed to come here, for we have never been able to rise above our atmosphere. However, there are so many arts of the devil in vogue nowadays, that I no longer wonder at anything.

"But I am forgetting that I was to convert you to our faith. After all that happened yesterday let us to-day adhere to the words of the book. Then listen to me. What you have read and heard so far will give you ample explanation concerning the nature of our god and the creation of the world. So it will not be necessary for me to repeat anything on that subject. Now, tell me how you think you can possibly deny the truth of our account. If you assume a creation, you cannot deny a creator, and must proceed from some beginning. Without a beginning there can be no end, and the infinite remains incomprehensible to us."

AlGeber answered: "As I understand you, the only thing necessary in the beginning, according to your account, was the almighty word, 'Let there be,' and everything was."

"Yes, and the word of god created the world about us with all that is in it, out of nothing," replied the priest, "despite your denial."

"'Nothing' is a nonentity, and even your god cannot make anything out of it. Did you ever find a shadow without something substantial that cast it? Even your book contradicts your belief when it says: 'In the beginning god created heaven and earth, and the earth

was without form and void,' accordingly, he only transformed what already existed," AlGeber added.

The worthy man of god answered him: "There is a good deal in what you say, but we see in those words only a second creation which fully developed all things. Although he spoke the creative word, that does not imply that everything was ready all of a sudden. The elements had to undergo a forming process by the divine hand before the life-giving breath of god went through the world and thus produced and perfected everything in its own time. This may have taken years. It is necessary to understand our account, and to explain it is the proper business of the servants of the church, my dear son. The others must simply believe."

"Then, if I understand you aright, your god did not create the world in six days. He only set life in motion and gave to each thing its appointed course. Is that your belief, priest of god?"

"It is as you understand it, and I am surprised that you comprehended our plan of creation so quickly," replied the priest.

Without the least confusion AlGeber answered: "We are accustomed to take words as commonly understood, and have care not to pervert their clear intent. If I read your book aright, I find only six days of creative activity in which the world was made. If you, therefore, believe the written account, you impeach your own statement. On the other hand, if you believe in a gradual development, you deny the truth of the book. The statement of the book is contrary to all reason and in opposition to our daily observa-

tion, while the other assertion destroys the foundations of your faith and, hence, your god.

"We can consider as correct only such a history of creation as agrees with the plan in operation at present. As the flower and leaf wither, so does man decay, only to fructify that which is to come. The new generation only fills the place of that which has been. And there are no exceptions in nature, all things being subject to uniform laws.

"If you assume a reasonable creation you naturally believe in a reasonable creator. His plan in the continuous creation, however, is quite different from the one in which you believe. As yet, you have said nothing to me about any change in the original plan of creation by your god. Your book also is silent on that point. But the creation going on at present you cannot deny. And as all things come into being now, so were they made in the first place. And as all that has been disappeared, so that which is now will decay and make room for that which is to come. Even the planet which you inhabit owes its existence to the gradual development of the universe, just as the minute cell invisible to the naked eye originates in the warmth of the mud."

"You may be right, my dear AlGeber," replied our worthy host, "but what about man? For the divine image cannot have taken being in any other way than as we believe and teach. You cannot put him on a level with the brute creation, for in him we see the finger of god in the world of life."

But AlGeber continued unabashed: "What you believe about the virtues of man in paradise is an idle

dream, and the very opposite is the fact. What your ancestors are supposed to have been at that time, man grew to be only by slow degrees. As the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the innocent enjoyment of which drew down upon your heads the wrath of an unjust god, doomed your forefathers to misery, so the apple of knowledge has made us what we are. The moment when we buried your god, we reached the regions where everlasting-light illumines and strengthens the understanding.

"What miserable superstition that crawls in dread of spectres, and seasons its own deeds with self-conceit! Examine the divine in yourselves before you acknowledge that which is incomprehensible. Look not behind you for paradise, for it lies ahead of you.

"Fie on you, who crawl around like vermin in the beard of the prophet without getting any nearer to your destination and dignity! Stop crediting deity with false qualities which are possessed neither by god nor by you. Out upon the wisdom of your god which destroys ninety-nine men in order to save one stupid barbarian!

"Cast away your faith, your stupidity, your self-conceit! Desert the altars of your deity which was raised on the bottle of error, and become disciples of the genius of reason. So will you be like unto gods. And since your ancestors tasted of the fruit from the tree of knowledge, do you also know yourselves. With the acquisition of higher knowledge your eyes will be opened, and you will find a purer god in your own selves.

"Like a football your god flung man upon the

earth, and after endowing him with all kinds of wickedness, tormented him in unspeakable ways, and then killed him.

"Fie on him and those who believe in him! Know, my worthy friend, that your faith does not ennoble you. Whatever your people may think of it, it cannot have escaped you that your plan of creation has suffered shipwreck in the course of time and must soon collapse together with its creator.

"You tell me your book is the work of god. I have proved to you that it is full of error and baseness. If your god brought forth such untruth from the depths of his ignorance, his divinity is gone. If he did it knowingly, what becomes of his justice and mercy?

"If your book, as we believe, was produced in a period of profound ignorance, such as existed in the early dawn of the human race, then it merely reflects the spirit of that period and is deserving of no attention except as an historical and literary monument. With us the rule is recognized: 'False in one, false in all.'

"But your report itself denies, better than I am doing or am able to do, all that you are in the habit of crediting to your god. What do you think, for instance, of his justice by which he visits a little offense on all future generations with the penalties of death and damnation, thus punishing those who had no share in the sin?

"Can you find any trace of his mercy where he drowns millions simply because they did that with which he had burdened their forefathers? Is it in the fact that he saved eight of them?

"Where was his omnipotence when he suffered the temptation to occur, and his wisdom, when he made the consequences evil instead of good?

"Answer me these questions, worthy priest, and your god shall be my god!

"You are silent. No, there you are again! Eternal resolution, inscrutable wisdom, divine justice, incomprehensible omnipotence, which permits wickedness in order to show its infinite mercy by the death of the son.

"Fie on your child's play and sophistry! If he saved you thus he perished himself.

"Did you ever consider how your god would have created all things if he had been the fountain of good? You grovel in the dust to acknowledge his rights without ever reminding him of his paternal duties. You say he has duties to no one, and no one has rights against him. A fine system of justice, indeed! Did the absurdity of your doctrine ever occur to you? Among our people we call that justice which brings about a proper relation of mutual rights and duties."

Without displaying any anger at the powerful arraignment, the old man replied:

"Let me tell you once more, your words are due to your ignorance of our god. True, he could have created man different, but he did not want to, and that is enough for us. Man must earn his own salvation, for he is at liberty to do the good and eschew the evil. Moreover, he was endowed with the necessary gifts of reason in order to know the wisdom of the creator. And nothing but strict obedience to divine law is necessary to walk in the right path. By the



death of his son god only intended to lead man back to his mercy. This mercy is in the possession only of the church which I serve, but man remains stubborn like the Jews and heathens of the old testament. And you from Mars are not better."

Such and more spoke the old man, and talked himself into a holy wrath, so that we almost fancied we saw the old angry god of the book before us in flesh and blood. And yet all this proceeded from the most devout heart. It was a touching tale he told of the sufferings of the righteous Job, the psalms of praise of old David, and the wailing songs of the prophets. But he said never a word of the injustice of god in Job's case, of the infamy of David toward Uriah, and of the decay of the people under the government of the priests.

AlGeber listened to him with a smile, then began anew: "Venerable man, you are to us a living example of the teachings of science that the human mind, like everything tangible and physical in the universe, continually develops and changes under the influence of ever-changing nature. The period of which you are a child is but a round in the ladder of mind-culture. You have not yet reached the loftier stage that we occupy. The childish belief in a personal god which continues to prevail here has long since disappeared from our planet. In remote antiquity our people also were adherents of the god you worship, but at present he lives only in our books, together with those who believed in him. And yet such was the seed from which sprang our present generation.

"You also speak of the gods of the Greeks and

Romans who did not survive the people that worshiped them. Here again, it seems, other god-ideas prevailed which were lost in your creed. As between two opinions one will always be the right one for a short space of time, while the other disappears.

"You have the same change here to which all material things are subject. Without the one, you will miss the other. The invisible is reached only by the tangible, as we oppose the infinite to the finite.

"I think I have demonstrated to you that all that is, whether visible matter or palpable force, is utilized over and over in nature and, therefore, cannot continue to live an individual existence. So the reason, and, hence, the cause, of your confused plan of creation collapses, since I deny the truth of the effects and purposes in which you believe.

"Instead of your unnatural history we believe in an entirely natural theory of creation, and have found the proofs of its truth. Thus we know, for example, that Mars consists of successive layers, each of which required an immense period of time for its completion. This mass, originally nebulous, grew into the planet of to-day.

"From excavations in the interior of Mars we have learned that the manner of growth in the different layers is widely different, and is graduated down to lifeless stone.

"In the higher strata we find plants from whose simple forms, no doubt, the many varieties existing to-day have developed. Above them we find remnants of animals that are extinct to-day. But we do not find any of the types living at the present time.

The strata near the surface of the growing planet show us the bones of primitive man, which differ from the body of the man of to-day in many respects. Here we also find animals and plants divided into more numerous varieties.

"The nearer we mount to the surface, the more we learn the most recent things that have been. We there find implements and buildings made by the hand of man, and can easily trace the connection up to the present age.

"Whole races and nations have come and gone since that time, and live among us only in their deeds. And every coming generation gives proof of the gradual growth of the mind and the truth of our belief, that paradise lies not behind us but ahead of us. What was sacred to those who have been has long been discarded by us as childish.

"The more the ever-brightening mind of man stripped the leaves from the god-tree of nations, the more clearly there lies before our eyes the naked truth of divine creation. And as you observed very truly, truth will never perish.

"Now tell me, if you please, how you are governed. We know from our books that the idea of a personal god is always connected in some way with a crude form of human government. As your belief in god is wrong, your temporal laws cannot be right. For imperfection attains its ideal in its like."

We had risen, and were admiring the sun sinking behind the western mountains.

"See how he completes the daily circle and gilds the

fruit with his radiance!" So saying, the old man walked ahead of us and began his explanations.

"As god governs the whole world so we also have a king whom we obey. For all authority comes from god. The growing children are obliged to learn in accordance with the old traditional rules, and are drilled in faithfulness to god and obedience to the powers that be. In that way church and state form the two main pillars of humanity, without which our whole structure must fall. Many have tried to shake them and perished in the attempt. For the people still remain true to the old god, though some innovators are trying to upset church and state. It often happens that a proud and ambitious prince forsakes the old path, and has the audacity to attack the true faith, but almost invariably he discovers in time that such a course would ruin his own power as well. For, as long as a people clings loyally to its god, it will also give due obedience to the king. True, it is difficult to follow all the commandments of god in a spirit of humility, since the mind of man, ever yearning for liberty, would fain cast aside its shackles. And inasmuch as this would lead to the dissolution of all human institutions we do not allow it. For as god punishes every transgression of his laws, so temporal justice must be meted out to the offender and lead him into the straight path. The discontent of man with the lot assigned to him by god is alone to blame for all wickedness. Hence, we hold that it remains the duty of church and state forever to guard the rights given to them by god, and thus to keep the individual within the limits of the whole."

To this AlGeber replied:

"As your book indicates to us only the cradle of primitive man, so it has become with you the child-bed of all falsehood, wherein the righteous seek and find their reward and the wicked a loophole for escape. Only in such a sea of duplicity could your social order of to-day find solemn justification.

"As the yearning for liberty and the striving of the peoples for truth spring from the enslaved condition of the individual and the subjection of nations to extraneous authority, so the stubbornness with which you cling to the god of the barbarians has obscured your minds and impaired the natural forces of your souls. As the climbing ivy will destroy the strongest oak by depriving it of the life-giving light, so your faith has crippled the capacity of your understanding and enveloped it in a deadly web which effectively excludes the rays of knowledge.

"From equal causes we are bound to expect equal effects. And as it is, your words call up in my mind the recollection of similar beliefs and conditions on our planet, which I will now narrate for your information and which will interest you, no doubt.

"Seven thousand years ago, our ancestors also believed in a personal god, like you. To the children he was pictured as a dear old man, with flowing white beard, who from sheer kindness and a longing for human company created all this beautiful universe.

"It came down to them from the traditions of the ancients that their god was the only true one and themselves his only creatures, destined by him to have dominion over the visible world. This fundamental

thought grew into a religious idea among their posterity and governed all their actions.

"As long as they kept their belief, and the state growing out of it, within the inhabited boundaries of the country and among their own people, there was no desire for expansion. They were content with the wealth of their flocks, and slaughtered many a head of them for their deity.

"It happened one day during a destructive storm that large flocks were carried into distant regions. The scouts that were sent out after them, on their return, told the people about the wonderful fertility of that country, and of the strange people that lived there and worshiped other gods. The elders of the people then remembered that god had promised their ancestors the possession of just such a land.

"Each, according to his age, invented new details of this tradition, and in that manner this god became the national leader of the people. The desire to migrate took hold of old and young alike, and soon they left the boundaries of their home country behind them. But having believed, up to that time, that they were the only inhabitants of Mars, they were surprised at finding, wherever their journey carried them, men who spoke a tongue and observed customs which they did not understand.

"Very soon the question of the rightful deity led to the distinction between my cattle and thy cattle, my land and thy land. Many a hard struggle started from this idea, and it always ended in victory for the stronger. Their own superior strength over their adversaries served only to confirm their belief in a single

strong god. And because they would fain themselves possess the fat flocks and the fertile country of the strangers, the latter fell at the bidding of the strong god. Then came the idea to all the people that the foreign gods must be weak, because they could not withstand the god who found pleasure in the odor of burnt offerings.

"Hence, the belief in a single strong god was confirmed and expanded among their descendants.

"From a sense of gratitude the people built for him a great temple in which the most skillful butchers were busy day and night offering fat beasts to him. And these butchers, being at all times near the deity, were esteemed so highly by many that they were frequently asked about the well-being of the deity and how the sacrifices were liked by him. Joy, sorrow, gratitude, atonement, everything, demanded sacrifices. In the course of time the sense of smell of their god developed so highly that these butchers held themselves qualified to smell out his wishes for new sacrifices and his pleasure in those already offered. Whatever satisfied their nostrils was pleasing to him, and what they disliked he would refuse. The butchers were quick to perceive the advantages gained by them and enhanced their authority among the people gradually by the most absurd lies.

"In that manner the chief butcher came by degrees to rule the people, because through him alone the wishes of the almighty became known. Very soon the office of butcher became hereditary in certain families, and thus originated the powerful caste of priests, which, in the course of time, enriched the deity and themselves at the cost of the people.

"The higher their authority rose, the more frequent became the sacrifices; the more their power grew, the more extensive and severe became the laws of their god. But while the people were forced to spend their time in carrying out the most absurd precepts, the priests imposed fines on every neglect of the divine law, which cost fresh offerings.

"In that way thy cattle became my cattle, thy land my land, and my god thy god. For as I was his servant, so you became mine, and slavery took its origin and justification in this victory of the stronger. Thence also emanated the national belief and the crude state which is connected therewith, as I shall presently show you.

"The people of which I am speaking had expanded by degrees and unconsciously adopted many usages of the vanquished tribes. With the growing wealth there came also the lust of further conquests. In order to gratify this feeling, the high priest of the country considered it wise, at the bidding of god, and in view of the assembled people, to proclaim the strongest of the warlike men king.

"As there was but one god and but one high-priest of god, so there should be but one king of the people.

"Thenceforth, whatever god ordered was communicated by the priest and executed by the king.

"From that time forward the ancient simplicity of the people disappeared, and with it their primitive purity and severity of morals.

"As the king would devote his warriors to death for the sake of a beautiful woman, so the lowest strata of the people did not scruple to follow his example.



“For with a young dove, a fat calf, or a heavy steer offered to the deity in the temple, conscience could be satisfied for the trespasses committed. Thus the simple pastoral people was turned into a commercial nation fond of splendor.

“Incontinence, murder, perjury and theft were weighed with the acquired gold, while justice, truth and purity of morals were laughed at.

“The old temple was pulled down and replaced by one more gorgeous. But though it was loaded with gold and precious stones, it covered only with a thin veil the injustice of the rich and the vices of the rabble. And the more handsome became the house of god, the more bestial his adherents.

“While the great men in the environment of the king gradually made themselves lords of the people, the latter were deluded with pleasures and feasts of all kinds, and thus deprived of the liberty they had enjoyed in a state of nature. Their rights were trampled under foot until nothing remained but burdens and duties. They became lost in the power of the king, the avarice of the priests and the gluttony of their god.

“For the popular faith had long disappeared among the priests and was used only as a means to an end.

“This state of things continued for many years, until another stronger people, enticed by the far-famed wealth of the land, began to make hostile invasions into its borders.

“In order to save their bare lives, the people allowed the victors to depart home laden with booty. But soon after, these sad events had faded from the memory

of the people. From time to time, however, men arose who condemned the wickedness of the priests and endeavored to restore the religious faith in its pristine purity.

"But under the dissolute government of the priests and kings, the people had sunk so low that they were successfully incited by the priests to stone these seers to death. Others, however, walked in their footsteps, and predicted a dark future and total decay.

"Again powerful enemies invaded the land, destroyed the temple of god, and carried off not only treasure, but a large part of the people into captivity. Not until that time were the eyes of those who remained behind opened, and they began to doubt the power of the priests and their god. Many fell away from him altogether and adhered to the gods of the strangers, whereas but few deplored the decline of the nation and the destruction of the temple.

"But the recollection of former greatness still retained its force, and wandering seers succeeded, by pointing forward to deliverance, in leading the remnants of this once powerful people back into the ways of the ancient faith. And although their dominion was never restored to its former status, the hope for the king to come kept the people together as a unit, and took an ever firmer hold upon their senses.

"Thus it came to pass that even those who had been enslaved by foreign masters, and adopted their customs and religion, upon their return to their native land were seized by the general longing and joined in the lamentations of their people. They all waited for a sign from above, and among the coming generations

the yearning only increased for the ancient splendor, as its memory had been preserved by popular tradition.

"Meanwhile, this people had learned much, and its mental horizon had been widened. By the hard blows it had suffered, and by intercourse with the strangers, its nature had been changed, and with this the old god perished. He, too, was changed.

"The more oppressive became the tribute to foreign rulers, and the power of the great of their own country, acquired by traffic and wealth from the blood of the people, the more keenly did the laws of eternal justice stand out in the minds of the people. And although they continued from ancient habit to observe the usages and precepts of the priests, nevertheless the yearning for liberty grew apace, until at last it overcame the voice of tradition and found vent in a desperate attempt.

"But the arms of the strangers whose protection was implored by the rich, were stronger than the remnants of natural vigor in the people. It succumbed. But at that time the last spark of the old faith was extinguished. The newly erected temple thenceforth belonged entirely to mammon and his servants, who interpreted and wrote down the history of the people and the law of god in harmony with their own ideas, and thereby only helped to widen the gulf between rich and poor, power and weakness. Like the people, the prevailing god-idea had drawn to itself much that was foreign to it and had degenerated into empty lip service, which killed the spirit, while adhering to the letter of the falsified scripture.

"Those who saw clearer than others, therefore, ut-

tered the complaint of the old strong god, accustomed to unconditional obedience: 'This people honors me with the lips, but its heart is strange to me.' "

The venerable man had listened with keen attention to every word uttered by my companion, but toward the end his uneasiness increased, and he said:

"Permit me to interrupt you, wise AlGeber, for at the tone of your speech the old covenant passes before my mind, and I see more clearly than ever how wonderful are the ways of the lord. For all you have told me marks the path of Jehovah and his chosen people."

"When did you say this faith existed on your planet?"

"Oh, as late as four thousand years ago! Why, that nearly agrees with our own revelation; but I am curious to hear how the further development proceeded, for, judging from the beginning, god sent a redeemer to you also. So tell me the further course of your history."

And AlGeber resumed his tale:

"While everything was in this bad condition, a simple man stood up among the people and taught all over the land what is still, at this day, our confession of faith. Then listen and judge for yourself if we are wrong."

Pulling out a tiny book, he began to read the gospel of the poor of the kingdom of god, as follows:

" 'If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear! "

" 'The lord of the world is but one, and a good father, and we all are his children.

" 'Therefore, love you him with your whole souls, for he is the spirit of truth and detests sacrifices.

“I issued from him and shall return to him, for I do his will and we are one. But he is greater than I.

“Do I blaspheme god, then, because I call myself the son of god?

“Whosoever shall do his will, the same is my brother.

“Love your neighbor as yourself. Love one another as I love you. Thus will you be perfect, even as your father, which is in heaven, is perfect.

“Therefore, learn from me, for I know the way of truth and will make you happy; for the kingdom of god lies within yourselves.

“Whoever would follow me let him deny himself, and whoever would exalt himself over you shall be the servant of all.

“You cannot be divine and serve mammon; therefore, lay up treasures which neither rust nor moths shall corrupt.

“Take no thought for the morrow what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, and wherewithal you shall be clothed, for your father knows of what things you have need.

“Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!

“Woe unto the rich! For it will be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for you to enter the kingdom of god.

“Woe unto you, perverters of truth and sycophants, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses and bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but yourselves will not move them with one of your fingers.

“Woe unto you, perverters of truth and sycophants, hypocrites! For you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, yet you have closed heaven to man and stolen the keys of knowledge!

“You who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, be accursed!”

“Such and many other things did he teach in the land, and the people loved him much for his gentle character and his beautiful teaching. At one stroke, the positions of rich and poor were reversed. And while the fettered will of the people was rising once more from the oppression of slavery, the new doctrine, as if by magic, threatened the power and wealth of the priests and their old god himself.

“Is it any wonder that they sought to kill him?

“But how?

“For the right of the people lay in the hands of a foreign ruler, who for reasons of state allowed the traditional god to subsist, but retained for himself and his jurisdiction everything else.

“As always happened among the half-men, attempts were first made to turn the people away from him. A rumor was spread that he was a false prophet and did good by the aid of satanic forces. But he answered that a kingdom which is divided against itself cannot stand. And he was right, for if wickedness turns to righteousness it certainly disappears.

“His authority among the poor kept rising continually, and many began to believe that he was the promised king of the land. The priests, and those learned in the traditional scripture, saw their power, and with it their former revenues, dwindle away. They

devised other means to get rid of him. They inquired into his birth and past history, but both were enveloped in darkness, as could easily happen under the conditions then prevailing among the common people. Then they attacked his mode of life. He was cried down as an idler, a glutton, and a drunkard, who kept the worst company. And in order to confirm this statement they brought to him a woman caught in adultery and asked him what the law prescribed for her. But he answered: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her!' Thus he always stung them where it hurt them most.

"Sometimes he was obliged to rebuke proffered honors quite rudely. Thus he said to a zealous adherent who addressed him with the words 'good master:' 'Why call you me good? There is none good but one, that is god.' For he did not want them to look upon him as a god.

"At last the priests and scribes thought they had prepared a proper trap for him. With the hypocrisy peculiar to their tribe they came and asked him: 'Master, we know that you are true and teach the way of god in truth. Tell us, therefore, is it lawful to give tribute to the emperor, or not?' Seeing their purpose, he answered: 'Render unto the emperor the things which are his, and unto god the things that are god's.' They questioned him no further.

"But they were only confirmed in their diabolical purpose and denounced him to the imperial governor as one who fomented discontent among the people and wanted to make himself their king. At last they had found the proper way, for as their god suffered no

other gods beside him, so it was forbidden under penalty of death to assail the authorities ordained by god. He was, therefore, taken prisoner and faced his accusers before the governor. Misinterpreting his teachings, they used the words they did not understand against him. But he made no defense whatever.

"He was charged with attacking capital, praising the poor, and condemning wealth. Thereby, it was charged, he was inciting the common people against the possessing class and the priests appointed by god, with a view of rising in armed rebellion against the emperor afterward. Everything was against him, and his adherents remained in hiding. For the weak fears the powerful and looks to his own welfare.

"He was condemned to death in order to protect the dear people from encroachments and disturbances, and to maintain the existing order. The law and the hatred of the priests were appeased, and had not extraneous circumstances intervened the case would have been closed.

"But a doctrine that takes hold of the popular soul with such force will not die with the teacher. Gradually his adherents appeared before the public again, his grave was found empty, and there were rumors of his having been seen here and there. Some of his disciples claimed to have spoken with him, and it was not long before the belief became general that he was taken up into heaven. A terrible unrest came over the people, and they began to deify him. So it happened that the popular fury degenerated into rebellion against the priests and open revolt against the foreign ruler.

"The old books were taken out of their hiding place



in the temple, and each construed the writing his own way. Everywhere traces were found of the promised savior of the people. Everything seemed to fit the slain master. The events after his death as well as his own teachings, led to the logical conclusion with many that he had been the true son of god.

"All bonds began to be dissolved. The wrath of the people found vent against the priests and their protégés, the rich, and threatened to subvert the state.

"So the foreign ruler was obliged to make war upon the land, in order to restore peace and good order. Despite the most desperate resistance, their capital was reduced to ruins, and even the temple of their god destroyed. But on the ruins of the old temple the new belief in a nobler god took root. Too late the ruler saw that by keeping the old national god of this people he had endangered his own dominion. The disciples of the master, who were taken prisoners, undertook to spread the new doctrine at his own capital, and finally their adherents were found in the palace of the emperor himself.

"In his country conditions were similar. A small part of the population had usurped all wealth and with it all power, whereas the masses of the people lived in nameless misery. The gods they worshiped protected only the powerful, and none could become pleasing to them unless he possessed wealth. And the rich were so surfeited with deities that many began to worship an unknown god.

"Like a whirlwind the new faith seized the minds, and carried along all who were poor and heavily laden in its headlong flight. Old altars and temples were

destroyed, idols broken to pieces, and sacrifices stopped, only to make room for new ones.

"For a long time those in power laughed at the new doctrine, but the time came when they were compelled to reckon with it. They decided to eradicate it in order to save the throne, wealth and old gods. But all in vain. Already many of the rich had accepted the new faith and given their possessions to the poor. For what availed their riches if they endangered everlasting life? On such a basis this community developed most seriously, and the succeeding persecutions only bound the individual still closer to the whole.

"The more the adherents were persecuted, the more rapidly did their numbers increase. The blood of the martyrs only fertilized the seed of knowledge, which with us has grown into a mighty tree. The higher the tree grew, the more did the old sink into ruins, dwindled the trade of the priests and fell the power of the mighty. They became more like the subjects, the more the latter recognized the deity in themselves.

"However, this condition was not long to endure. Foreign elements were mingled with the simple doctrine of the master, and the deep-rooted slavery of the people did the rest. With the greatest subtlety god was elevated and creation degraded. Only animated by the most profound humility did man dare to approach him, only in the dust of impotence could he look for mercy from him.

"Scarcely did this false doctrine gain headway, when to the slavery of the body was added that of the mind, and the safety of old conditions was assured. For it is in the subjection to god that the power of the individual

and the slavery of the masses has its origin, as the wisdom of the one often is based only upon the ignorance or timidity of the other. What had been left in the beginning to the experience of the elders was now arrogated by certain ambitious disciples, to whom faith was but a stepping-stone to advance their own power.

"Amid all these supervening modifications, the spirit of the noble doctrine was gradually lost. The masses voluntarily subjecting themselves to those who were better informed, many relapsed into the old unjust order without so desiring. A degrading reaction upon the nature of deity itself was the natural consequence of these influences. All that existed, whether good or evil, found justification in the will or permission of god, and mortal man must not set himself against his ordinances. Such, at least, were the claims of the surviving priests and the ruler of this people, who had speedily discerned that element of the new doctrine which forboded danger to the existing institutions. So their god remained what he had always been, a human patchwork and the perverter of natural rights.

"But as the deep-rooted belief in a personal deity always demanded a caste of priests, so the latter in turn reverted to the established right of kings. And as the priest derived his rights from god and clung to them with tenacity, so the king believed in the temporal dominion secured to him. Although the king's care for the temporal welfare was, by this arrangement, subject to the priests, the two, nevertheless, found in one another mutual support. Their united power rested in reality upon the obedience of the people having faith in their superior rights.

"As the priest cared for the spiritual welfare of the people in the traditional sense, it was the duty of the king, on the other hand, to adapt temporal justice to the vested advantage of the individual over his neighbor, and thus to lend legal sanction to the disgrace of the disinherited. And inasmuch as all legislation sprang from the motives of accumulated wealth, and thus withheld from the one what the other had taken from him, the sources of temporal rights were poisoned by the pestilential breath of the existing barbarous notions of ownership. The natural equality among men was thus lost. Even that which was taken from him unjustly, could not be resumed by the person who had lost it. And the law took good care that it was never restored to him.

"New ways were continually found to derive the right of possession from the falsified books of the old god, while the disinherited were meantime referred to the virtuous teachings of the wise man. As, on the one hand, affluence led to debauchery which ruined mind and body, so the new faith taught the poor the noble virtues of obedience and contentment. Everything was equalized with hair-splitting subtleties, and even discovered in the teachings of the master. But there came a time when light separated itself from darkness. The small number who first knew themselves also acquired an insight into the existing injustice and found the cause thereof in the prevailing god-idea. Their number increased, and already the influence emanating therefrom was growing perceptible. The minds divided. As with one part the belief in the supernatural could not be eradicated, with

the other part the moral development of the mind proceeded in the natural way.

"The breeding of the human race began with us in the following manner: As formerly they had grafted shoots from cultivated trees upon wild trunks and produced precious fruit, as from the oldest times the art of refining the breed of animals had been practiced with assiduity, so they began in this period to remove the rank growth of weeds from the hearts and minds of men by uniting the good with that which was inferior. The design was to breed a higher type by artificial means, and it was successful. This principle having been universally accepted and become the leading ideal governing individual relations, natural selection was thereby directed into the proper channel, and by its elementary force carried man forward and upward to higher and broader planes of physical and mental culture. But all this was not accomplished without hard struggles, as you shall hear. Generations came and went before the higher man could move freely in his natural environment. This part of the human race became ever more perfect; disease and suffering disappeared when the last priest exhaled his infidel spirit. Only after he was buried did enslaved humanity breathe freely and learn to know and appreciate itself and nature around it. As man found the creator everywhere, so he carried him in his own heart. That was also the knell of the government of kings. The place of blind traditionary belief was taken by searching science. Then came free thought, and at last the shackles of slavery fell. With that point began the period of the god-man on Mars.

## CHAPTER III.

## HOW GOD WAS MADE INTO GOLD.

"While one part of the people, clinging to the supernatural, spoke of the advent of the wise man mistakenly as though god was made flesh, the new, pure doctrine became to a few the foundation on which to make man divine.

"You ask how we can be perfect, having neither church nor the primitive kind of government that prevailed among the half-men. Nothing is simpler. I might ask you with as much reason how you can be so imperfect, despite church and state. It is since we are rid of the mediators between ourselves and the deity that we know the divine spark in our own nature. What the wise man taught we practice among ourselves.

"About our manner of life and the aims and objects of our being I shall tell you later. For the present, I propose only to explain to you the history and variable fate of the believers as distinguished from the knowing ones.

"And since we count you and your adherents and the millions like you among the former, you shall tell me if your experience on this planet has not been similar. If so, there is a great possibility that your eyes will be opened and you will shake off the yoke

of ancient tradition and grow into new and more perfect beings.

"As I have already intimated, religious thought is conditioned in, and modified by, circumstances of climate, government and heredity. Environment, whether traditionary or made by the individual himself, together with the economic requirements of the people, determines its god. That which governs to-day may be laid on the shelf to-morrow. As the giant among his neighbors or a youthful people among the nations is conquered by age or forces superior to it and slowly declines and disappears, so in the course of time the god-idea was developed more actively in one place and with less vigor elsewhere, until the stronger one, adapting itself to changing circumstances, obtained the ascendancy, and attracting all other ideas like a magnet, imposed its own form and nature upon them.

"Different ideas were amalgamated and the new elements of the amalgamation handed down to posterity for the truth. But as the degree of mental culture determines all impressions in nature according to its own character, and very frequently construes things 'clean from the meaning of the things themselves,' it was inevitable that the prevailing religious idea transmitted to the future a strange jumble of truth and falsehood, which the babe immediately absorbed at his mother's breast and assimilated as an integral part of his nature.

"Those nations which were engulfed in the stronger states and vanished in the light of the existing cycle of ideas left behind them, nevertheless, strong shadows,

from the unconscious amalgamation of which with the freshly blossoming faith a new religious doctrine was practically evolved.

"While one part of the people I am speaking about believed the simple man came only to renew the old god of tradition, others held him to be the savior of the people promised to the fathers, and, consequently, a prophet of god. To the greater part of oppressed humanity, however, he became the true son of god and, hence, himself a god. The low intelligence of these wretched creatures misunderstood the simplest of teachings given to them, which in turn were spun out to infinite lengths by ignorant enthusiasts and began, by degrees, to equal the commandments of the old god in severity.

"All that ennobles human life and lends value to it was forbidden as being sinful, like physical life itself. The soul dwelling in the body could rejoice only after it was freed from the fetters of the flesh. He who tormented the body was pleasing to god, and he who could go hungry the longest during life could gorge himself to satisfaction in heaven.

"If one reached a stage where he was able to sleep on pins he was called a saint. Scarcely was the master cold in death when quarrels arose such as attach only to the actions of the lowest of men. People vied with one another in so-called self-denial, while elsewhere unworthy disciples arrogated the government to themselves. The greatest gifts of bountiful nature were lost to these men the more the teachings of the noblest one among them all were misunderstood and falsified.

"Even as some bore all losses of worldly goods with



patience and forgot their physical well-being, the avaricious among them found means to utilize everything for their own profit.

"The old priesthood found a new lodging-place, deducing the poor with solemn words, while inviting the rich to give of their abundance to the church, which many did. The accumulated wealth of the so-called servants of god unloosened the greed of the ruler, who, seeing how willingly the followers of the simple man were harnessed to the yoke, formed the resolution to make the strange doctrine serve his ends with the aid of the priesthood.

"After the new faith was elevated to the place of the state religion the consequences of the false principles that had been added became apparent. From the religion of the oppressed it at once became the oppressor of all dissenters. The simple, beautiful god of the wise master was surrounded with the tinsel of ill-gotten wealth and the splendor of the imperial court, and in such company fell away to a skeleton, which no one knew for the original.

"As there was but one emperor in the great realm who ruled the people, a shrewd priest in the former capital to the westward usurped the title and pretended functions of the only ordained mediator between god and man, and by firmly defending his pretensions and allowing favors to the ruler managed to increase his following continually. His audacity carried him so far that he finally called himself the vice-regent of god on Mars.

"The deluded people not being yet worthy of liberty, came in the course of time to believe this

claim. The ambitious ruler and the rich man of the country found profit in everything, while the superstitious rabble was satisfied with their jugglery. The murmurs of the better men were suppressed by force. If the lowest classes became discontented it was the priests who first held up the falsified teachings of god before the eyes of the people.

"If this did not succeed, the ruler went to war, and each shared according to his rank in the spoils of conquest. When his hunger is appeased the lion will not roar, and the wrong done is speedily forgotten. What the ruler resolved, the high-priest of the empire declared pleasing to god. So it happened that all the horrors that were perpetrated were construed to the greater glory of god. Did he not create the world for them? Why, then, should they tolerate others? The rest were children of the devil, and everything was fair to encompass their destruction.

"The old laws were repealed and new ones, more in keeping with the prevailing religion, were substituted. The rights of the individual were swallowed up in the protection of vested property. The more wealth was accumulated on the one side, the more notable became the lack of freedom and the weakness of the people on the other.

"As in the days of the old god, there stood up men from time to time who sought to spread a purer idea of god. Their fate was the same as that of the seers of old. The high-priest denounced them for heretics and disturbers of the people, and the ruler, ever willing, made away with them. Meanwhile, the faith had degenerated into empty lip service and fetish worship.

The greedy priests began to traffic in the holiest things. God was made into gold. They began to worship everything. Pieces of wood, nails, garments and bones, even the swaddling clothes in which the mother was reported to have held the master when an infant, did not escape the keen eye of the priests. So-called houses of god were built in all places and were open to the faithful on appointed days.

"At the services of worshiping the idols the priests wore gold-embroidered garments of peculiar design, and by their splendid appearance charmed the people and covered up their own vile misdeeds. Every kind of villainy could be atoned for with money. After depositing a certain amount of money, the faithful son of the church had permission to go on sinning. With gold the rich man bought dispensation from the existing precepts whenever it became irksome to obey them. By leaving a legacy to the church one could secure promotion of one's seat in heaven. Even after death the survivors were able to purchase absolution or a reduction of the punishment decreed by god, according to the amount given. Gold flowed into the hands of this god and his servants in perfect torrents. He wanted no pigeons or oxen, but gold, nothing but gold. The value of gold did not change and it could be used again at any time. The demands of the church increased more and more; still the faithful people did not grumble, for in this way they meant to purchase everlasting bliss and the privilege of eating at the same table with the son of god.

"But it was not given to the ruler long to enjoy

the newly-acquired friendship. The weeds grew over his head and frustrated his own ambitious plans.

"He readily allowed the high-priest in the western city to adjust such disputes as might arise among the disciples of god at the imperial court. He was thus relieved of this care and could say to the beaten party that distance assured impartiality and the decision was bound to be right. He thought by favoring this priest to safeguard his western frontier and maintain peace at home. But scarcely had he closed his eyes in death before the insatiate greed of the ambitious priest transcended all bounds.

"He began to derive his authority and rights from the teachings of the wise man, and thus to found a tyranny over the souls of men which he alone was entitled to exercise.

"As the slight movement of snow on the mountain top, when once set in motion, drags everything along with it and grows into the mighty avalanche, so the favor shown the one priest was sufficient to erect upon the ruins of the old faith a most dangerous tyranny over the souls, upon which the power of the emperor and the natural liberty of the people slowly went to pieces, as the helpless wreck splits upon the rocks.

"What had been won must not be lost, so they began to forge documents and reports by which the ignorant were duped. Coming generations looked upon the falsified records as the divinely vested right of the priesthood. Even the rulers bowed obsequiously to the rod. Then the people remained the only part to suffer. The power and wealth of this priest-ruled state grew apace, and by the aid of the temporal rulers became inviolable.

"The beautiful teachings and all their simplicity were buried in the books defaced by the ignorance and avarice of the priests. Woe to him who dared assail the truth of the report or demonstrate the falsity of the priestly privileges! The judgment of god upon him! The fate of the master was repeated. The church was no longer persecuted, but the persecutor. Murders in the name of god became general and reached those in particular whose wealth was desired. Thousands of the noblest of men testified with their lives the prevailing tyranny.

"The doctrine of poverty served to prove the righteousness of the ownership of land. After stripping the people of their natural rights it was an easy matter to sell the immortal soul of the individual. It defies description how openly and brazenly they proceeded in their traffic and how they kept the ignorant, credulous people in abject fear and trembling.

"While the rankest weeds were thus flourishing in the field of religious faith, the embodiment of the religious idea in that of the state could not fail to clothe the character of the master in a confused jumble of nonsensical lies.

"Some asserted he was only like god, while others taught he was one with god in nature but not himself god. Those who maintained he was god himself at last remained in the ascendancy and began to inquire into his origin and the purpose of his becoming flesh. By degrees there was developed among this wretched people the insane idea that he was sent by the father to save mankind from sin and death.

"From this, the government of the priests followed,

of course. Did not the falsified books say that he gave to them and their successors the keys of heaven? How was it possible, then, to go there without their help? And to go there became the most ardent longing of enslaved mankind.

"Instead of endeavoring to realize the beautiful and divine in life, human avarice erected a kingdom of heaven lying outside of the boundaries of the world. By this means the poor remained content and the rich kept their ill-gotten wealth.

"In order more effectually to avert the dreaded discontent they created in the bowels of the planet the horrible pit of hell in which the sinner must roast forever as a punishment for his misdeeds in life. This creation of the imagination did not fail to frighten the people, and inasmuch as it threatened the rich as well as themselves the poor believed in it the more fervently.

"Nothing more hideous was ever devised by the degenerate mind of man to the prejudice of his fellow-man. He who had previously lived a righteous life now began to grow conceited. Man learned to dissemble. Out of this developed the abject misery which befell these poor people in the future. Never before had men sunk so low or acted so infamously.

"But while the misery and brutalization of the people increased more and more with the belief in heavenly rewards, the temporal demands of the rich and the priests multiplied from day to day.

"Possession and government by the few being just, it was concluded that service and obedience on the part of the others were proper. Such was the will of

god, and thus did he ordain it. The stronger the theocracy in the garments of the priesthood became, the more did true religion fade away, until at last the noblest doctrine was the butt of scorn and derision, and the divinity of the master himself was represented as a fairy tale. The successors of the first cunning upstart among the priests gradually enlarged their power, until finally they were themselves deified by the people. So far did it go that the ruler of the empire was glad to hold their stirrups or kiss their slippers.

"With a view of binding the priesthood more closely to the church, the high-priest issued an order interdicting marriage to them. By this means he planned to cut them off entirely from the outside world. Still he was unable to change their nature, and so it was not long before the forbidden fruit rose the higher in value the more it was withheld from the disciples of the lord.

"What the cuckoo is among the birds, the priest thenceforward became in the human family. As the work of the locksmith serves to stimulate the cunning mind until it learns how to open the most perfect lock, so the priests managed to evade the strict, unnatural precept and to indulge their passion where it injured others most.

"This precept, like all others, was claimed to be derived from the doctrine of the master. Did he not remain unmarried himself? Although far from emulating his purity of morals, they at least pretended to follow in his footsteps. It is incredible what debauchery and unnatural lust was fostered by this interdiction. The evil example exerted a corrupting in-

fluence upon the people, even as it invaded the private life of the individual to his detriment. Corruption of morals became general. The priest alone concealed his infamy most easily beneath the mantle of godliness, the descendants of the ancient believers having familiarized themselves with the idea that he was incapable of sin. Did he not frequently hold the true body of god in his hands, and stood he not closer to the deity than all others?

"Even out of the degradation of the people the priest-state coined money. Everthing that was natural was prohibited. Everything that was prohibited was sinful. For everything that was sinful man was consigned to the open pit of hell, from which there was no release. But it continued to remain uncertain which of the departed were really there. And the priest of god wisely refrained from asserting the presence of any of the dead, as long as the survivors were able to assuage the wrath of god by gifts of money.

"So an anteroom was created where, with proper treatment, the ordinary human misdeeds were extinguished in the course of time. God was over-merciful and was most readily satisfied by the chink of gold. And none but the priests had a supply of the requisite formulæ and knew how most advantageously to write the proper prescription for each case as it occurred. They weighed the sins and fixed the fines so methodically that the tables of rates yielded an infinite revenue.

"Everything cost money, and those who had none were left to roast forever. In that way the usurer was let off cheapest, for he had taken from others that which became a blessing to himself. With the neces-



sary cash the wrath of god was turned into god's mercy, as by the spell of the priest common bread was converted into the real body of god. All this was done as easily as by pouring water over him, and, mumbling the formulæ of the priest, the crudest heathen was transformed into the mildest child of god. Whoever failed to have this done was damned in-advance unless he was converted and subjected himself to the dominion of the priests. Therein lay his only salvation. And how many were converted, how many saved, who never again thereafter saw a day of prosperity!

"Each individual must be made new in the belief in god. The church alone remained as of old. Industiously it gathered up all that the dupes cast aside and were taught to discard as sinful. But what it once acquired was never restored to him who was in need of it. It belonged irrevocably to the insatiate god before whom man dissolves into dust.

"The poor people lay prostrate, not knowing whence rescue would come. On the one side they were deluded with the fancy of a glorious heaven after death, on the other side gaped wide the jaws of hell. Neither one nor the other was attainable in this life. Still it was absolutely necessary to prepare for both. While the unattainable was thus forever dangling before the eyes of man he forgot the material necessities, which the priest managed to appropriate.

"The inevitable outcome of such conditions was the development of a regular science, having for its object to explore the nature and wishes of the deity. Relentlessly it progressed under the protection of pliant rulers, and in the course of time deprived the faithful

of the last remnant of natural liberty, by forbidding independent thought and aspiration. God and the man made in his image thenceforth languished in the narrow dungeon of the science of divinity. And the priesthood took care that the prevailing darkness was not lifted.

"The high-priest having succeeded in attaching his disciples to himself, the whole priesthood now fell to making the people docile also. He who confessed his misdoings in a spirit of repentance, down to the smallest detail, was relieved of the imaginary burden by a short sentence, and was once more at liberty to breathe freely. In that way the institution of the confessional originated, whereby the priesthood was enabled to lay bare the most secret emotions of the human heart and to destroy the trembling miscreant by a mere glance.

"By this means a handle was afforded for instigating the most pernicious movements among the people, while at the same time every noble aspiration could be nipped in the bud. Of all the achievements of the priests, this was the greatest. Had not the soil been well prepared, mankind would never have tolerated it as the teaching of god. What had been irksome and objectionable to the father was accepted in a devout spirit by his very son. But the more he poured out his heart, the more firmly did he knit his fate to the whim of the cunning listener. The latter became privy to his guilt and was in a position not only to be dangerous to him in this life, but by a turn of the hand to transform the hereafter. And that was just what the penitent wanted to avert.

"By this institution the priesthood succeeded most

effectively in not only retaining the ancient slavery, but forging additional shackles about the excitable mind of man. The doom of the people was sealed. Woe to him who strove for freedom! The judgment of god upon him! Whoever dared contradict the prevailing insanity fell a victim to divine justice as it was then practiced by the priests on Mars. And that demanded either death or unconditional obedience.

"As they became masters in the practice of ruining the endeavors of noble minds by slander in the confessional, so also did the use of the dagger and the preparation of lingering poisons grow into a flourishing art. If the people could not be moved to terror at sight of true manhood, it became necessary to remove such men. Instead of punishing the murderer afterward, the affair was explained to the people as the judgment of god, which had taken the guilty one off. Wherever they held sway, the bones of their murdered victims lay bleaching, and ravens croaked hoarsely over well-filled dungeons.

"In place of real divine worship, the adoration of images, days and places increased excessively. Not satisfied with this growth, they continued filling up heaven with so-called saints, who were worshiped like god.

"The mother of the master enjoyed the special favor of priests and people to the verge of madness. She was called by the most tender names and perfect litanies were devoted to her, the expressions of which reached the highest degree of absurdity. Woe to him who questioned her virginity! The judgment of god upon him! For years the learned doctors of divinity

disputed whether she conceived in the old-fashioned way or through the ear. At last the decision was in favor of the ear, and those who denied the new doctrine of the conception lost their lives.

"These everlasting excursions of the priests into the supernatural led to the result that the popular soul was stirred by a powerful nervous agitation which claimed thousands of victims. Whole armies of the most ignorant rabble ran together and scoured their bodies raw for the greater glory of god. Others had gone so far that their muscles twitched involuntarily and their movements resembled a dance. What among the higher priesthood had settled down into quiet hypocrisy was genuine suffering among the wretched people.

"Already the voice of revolt was heard here and there. The noble-minded saw the life of the priests and the detestable idolatry with loathing. What was at first derided with contempt grew into a howling storm in the eastern part of the empire. Images and altars were laid in ruins and primitive simplicity supplanted the contemptible priest service. Obedience to the high-priest was renounced, and thus the defection was made complete. What began here was finished at a later period in the western part of the empire.

"The free spirit of man began once more to revive, and the counter-blow gradually freed the ruling god-idea of the cobwebs of time. Many denied the truth of the traditional scriptures. The rotten foundation began to quake. With all the strength of despair the war of extermination began on both sides. That part of the race which clung to the priest-faith turned like

wild beasts on their neighbors, if the latter thought otherwise. Woe betide him who acted contrary to the priests! He was damned! The judgment of god upon him!

"What had previously been accessible only to the priests—the scripture—now became common property. At last the people saw how their fathers had been duped. The high-priest hurled his curse from afar over the new devil's art, but it rebounded harmless from the resuscitated spirit of man, and the wise ones laughed at him. The rulers called upon the scholars to confirm their ancient rights and, like the people, resisted further encroachments of the priests. The latter were obliged to give up their practices of debauchery or be subject to temporal justice. Even some of the succeeding dissolute high-priests failed to escape the wrath of the awakened people if they did succeed in evading the lingering poisons of ambitious rivals.

"The more the art of printing rose and expanded, the lower did the power of the priests sink. Beginnings were made to unfold the abominations of their past history, to prove the falsity of their doctrines from their own works, and to sustain the words of the good master in opposition to their teachings. Heavy thunder clouds gathered over their heads and presaged a dark future. Irresistible was the onward march of science, and every new doctrine shook the strongest pillars of their dominion.

"Scarcely had the disciples of god recovered a little from the shock of these events, when a seaman, unknown to fame, succeeded in convincing the ruler of one people that there was land beyond the sea. From

old habit the priests were consulted.. For a long time they resisted the idea and sought to show from their sacred books that Mars was flat and not inhabited beyond the ocean. The high-priest also approved this opinion and condemned the project as inspired by the devil. But the lust of conquest caused the prince to yield to the seaman, and the conjecture proved true.

"The voyage was successful. A new magnificent country lay before the astonished eyes of the seafarers, and it was inhabited, besides.

"The old brood was now most thoroughly scared, but not dead. The tricksters surrounding the high-priest began to concoct new wiles. What had been lost in the old field of the faith was to be regained in the new land. Here faith found fresh work, for it was learned with surprise that the god-ideas there prevailing were altogether different from their own. The ruler decided to take possession of the discovered land and to preach the god of his people to its inhabitants. In this wise what the high-priest had condemned as a snare of the devil became a great boon to his craft. As ever, it was again the priests who first reached forth their greedy hands for the new acquisitions.

"The poor native who worshiped god in his own fashion, must stop and change his ways or he was lost. The foreign faith was imposed upon him by force. The old horrors were repeated. For the greater glory of god there was murder, plundering and stealing. Still the pretext was that they came only to preach peace and the kingdom of god. A fine doctrine, that speaks one way and acts another! The liberty of the natives gradually perished and it was not long before

this land also was blessed with the famous priest-slavery in its aggravated form.

"What preaching in words failed to accomplish was finished with armed force. The wealth of the priesthood grew enormously. With insolent hands they took from the people while blessing them, and obedient to revived avarice the interior of Mars was dug up in search of precious metals.

"Although the faith had received a great blow by this expansion, it was easily forgotten in view of the accumulated gold.

"The subsequent fate of this new country I shall tell you later, that you may see how impious were the actions of these priests, and how little they followed the teachings of the master. While their idolatry flourished in this country, it bore in its consequences the most hideous fruit. It was here the priesthood laid the foundation upon which gold was made god. But you shall soon see how the new worship spread and in the course of time stifled all noble strivings in the human breast.

"What was here gained with great labor, was lost all the more rapidly in the old land. With eager expectations men had watched the course of the voyage and when the word of the priests failed to prove true, the old faith received the first powerful blow from which it was never to recover. The question was asked: "If god himself illumines the priest, how does it happen that he palms off such falsehoods on the people? By the art of printing, knowledge had been increased and expanded and idolatry crowded out, while the discoveries led to the conviction that the lands hitherto known

constituted but a small part of our planet. Other voyages were made eastward, and there also were found lands and peoples, the nature and appearance of which placed them as a connecting link between man and beast. All the experiences thus gathered were printed and given to the people, and the loss of the old priesthood was inevitable, as the blow to their pride was severe.

“When their books—which they derived straight from god—proved false, the conclusion was drawn that they could not be much better themselves. Either they were ignorant like the deity which they served, or willful impostors and strangers to the truth. They now fell back upon their old tricks. The printed books were condemned as works of the devil, and by the aid of obsequious rulers much that was valuable was consigned to the flames. The people were not to read and be educated, because they would else desert the theologians. But do what they might, they could not regain what had been lost.

“So they began to impress the people with magnificent buildings. New holidays were appointed, jubilees of all kinds proclaimed, and relics never before heard of suddenly discovered, in order to save the old power from ruin. In the capital of the high-priest with the riches dishonestly acquired, a splendid structure had been erected which was calculated to bind the faithful anew to the old doctrine. All these enterprises consumed millions of the piled-up money and yet failed of their purpose. Now the treasure was gone and the house of god remained unfinished notwithstanding all the outlay. The more they tried to



turn backward the hand of time, the more irresistible became the current of new events, which threatened to break the yoke of tradition. Still ways were found to save them. With a skill born of long practice, the high-priest set on foot a traffic in pardons for sins. All known lands were canvassed by faithful servants. The ignorant but devout people were captivated by the advantages of the scheme, and millions flowed into the treasury of the high-priest. It was taught without circumlocution that the works of the saints were stored up in such ample quantities in the heavenly treasure chamber of the church, that the abundance of them was not only sufficient to cover any sins already committed, but fully capable of atoning for offenses still to be perpetrated. It was a simple auction of the seats in heaven to the highest bidders. 'When in the box the ducats ring, straight up to bliss the spirits spring,' were words heard everywhere. It has not been recorded how many murderers, thieves, ravishers of innocence, or wife-beaters bought seats for the everlasting heavenly concert in this easy manner. We can only say that never before did such a fury of crime break loose as after the pardons were sold. But the splendid church was completed, which in itself was sufficient for the greater glory of god.

"Unfortunately, this infamous traffic was carried too far. Even priests protested. In the north of the land, a bold disciple of god took a vigorous stand against it, both by word and deed. He was not only dissatisfied with the infamy of this last doctrine, but in rough outlines assailed the existing church-state by demonstrating its rottenness from his own experience. He de-

manded a return of the old simplicity if they would remain true to the teachings of the master.

"The contradiction of the high-priest followed on the heels of the revolt of the disobedient disciple, but it was too late to stem the tide of the new current of thought. The strong man burned the judgment of the high-priest consigning him to damnation, and in violation of the old precepts of the church took a wife. Following his example, monklets and nunlets, as they were called, escaped from the harness of involuntary renunciation and restored their nature to honor. What had been at first only a revolt among the servants of god, by degrees now took hold of the people at large. Already some princes compelled the surrender of church property to needy subjects. Each, according to his capacity strove to make up for the wrongs of centuries, and from this strife arose the most terrible war for the sake of faith. Like wild beasts people of one creed flew at the throats of those who believed otherwise. Murder and plundering was done upon command till whole countries resembled carrion fields.

"After the storm had passed, the survivors looked mournfully over their work of destruction. But as the atmosphere is purer after a storm, so religious belief, though divided, came forth more refined from the struggle. The dominion of the priests had gone to ruin in places. Science, however, was not ruined, but had only grown.

"The opinion began to be heard that Mars was spherical, and did not stand still, as had been believed up to that time, but like other planets revolved around the sun, and thus was part of a great system. This

doctrine also was condemned but not suppressed and under the new conditions spread rapidly.

"As the receding peals of thunder indicate the gradual subsidence of the storm, and the dazzling lightning dies away in fainter flashes, so the curses and anathemas of the high-priest spent themselves, unheeded and undreaded, before they passed the lofty mountains which separated his capital from the northern part of the land.

"It seemed almost as though the noble teaching of the master was at last to be realized. On the one hand, simple manners had returned, while on the other science was seeking quietly to explore the eternal mysteries of nature. Both elements were striving for the truth, and in their peaceful union the nations might have been blessed.

"But the old disturber was still alive. Although the wings of his old power were singed he had enough strength left to set the rulers against each other and by the intrigues and lies of his servants to sow discord between the nations. Having recourse to the most disgraceful tactics, both parts were convinced by cunning devices that the proposed sacred end hallowed the means employed. And since from that time forward the following of the high-priest was made up of the lowest elements of human society, it was an easy matter to whisper into the ear of one ruler the evil intentions of his neighbor. Thus they became the tale-bearers of the mighty. These disciples of god used the peace doctrine of the master in order to confirm their old power by stirring the hatred of nations. The greater the gulf became between the believers, the

more vigorously did the old priest-state flourish, all its aims and endeavors thenceforth being concentrated upon the destruction of the one enemy—science.

“First, individual rulers were won over to the idea that by the teachings of the wise ones the people were being led astray and their own power endangered. But in order to hold the favor of the masses as well, the disciples of god at the same time instilled into the minds of the ignorant believers mistrust of the purposes of the princes.

“In such wise they made themselves masters of all without being subject to either part. The prince beheld in them the guardians of his power, while the people considered them the defenders of their rights. This point having been reached their true intentions were revealed.

“While men of science were compelled by the most cruel means to forswear their teachings, the printed works were consigned to the flames. Persecution became systematic after the hatred and avarice of the mob had been unshackled and the power of the rulers laid low. The better to perpetuate the work of their own knavery even the art that had been cried down as devilish was pressed into service. So the priests made themselves at one stroke the educators of the young, whose minds were made receptive to the old rusty god-ideas, by poisoning the youthful soul against the achievements of science. Thus they came to be slanderers of the good. And as the powerful lion succumbs impotently to the stings of the invisible gnat, so the men of science were obliged to submit to the slander-

ous hissing of these snakes of darkness, without knowing who their adversaries were.

"Wherever they gained a foothold, the pernicious effects of their teachings speedily became apparent. While in one place, a prince who enjoyed their dislike fell a victim to their machinations, elsewhere they caused thousands of dissenters to be destroyed at the bidding of the ruler.

"Perjury and greed, hypocrisy and knavery, slander and murder permeated the simplest souls. The ancient spirit of cruelty erected the most abominable monuments to baseness and slavery wherever their diabolical influence reached. Poison and the dagger removed the noblest men as of yore. And all this, nevertheless, was done solely for the greater glory of god, as they managed with their native sophistry to put a fair color on everything. Both the murdered prince of one country and the dissenters in the other land were offensive to god, so his will alone was done.

"The pestilential breath of hypocrisy permeated and poisoned the generations educated by them so completely that even the mind and body of the individual were stunted. So they imprinted upon man the badge of Cain and became birds of ill omen to the nations. For in the flourishing clerical nonsense was rooted the subsequent decline of these wretched beings.

"As the fox, ridding himself of lice, drops the moss on which they have gathered into the water, yet does not change or improve after disposing of his little tormentors, so the priests by short words freed the wicked ones and themselves from sin, yet failed to advance a single individual nearer to his divine destiny or to ennoble the

hearts of the people. The ones remained foxes as before, while the others never raised themselves above the horizon of the louse.

"On the contrary, those lands whose gates remained closed to them, begot children of knowledge, who by the light of science cast the old priest-state out among the rubbish of time. Here the men of science were protected, their books were safe from the flames. Natural laws never known before that time were discovered, and creation lay like an open book before the astonished eyes of all. The genius of the age discovered that the doctrines of the priests were taken from a by-gone period and the account of the creation accepted till then was a myth. The more completely the wise men investigated Mars and the starry heavens about us, the more untenable became the old faith. The former belief of the people, that there were no living beings but themselves having been refuted by the discovery of new lands on their planet, the discovery of living creatures on your Earth moved all minds most profoundly. They were prepared to believe anything but that.

"Even the noblest of these people still retained much of the ancient priest-creed and, therefore, looked upon the teachings of the wise men as an attack upon their god. The purpose was to dethrone or even destroy him, which the faithful could never allow. Thus a wretched compact was concluded between the apostates and the old priest-state, founded upon a community of interests, whereby the progress of science was perceptibly checked with the aid of servile rulers.

"The adherents of the married monk, also, had

preachers, who in the course of time arrogated more and more to themselves.

"As in the case of the old priests, their existence was likewise endangered by the advance of science, and the power of the rulers afforded the desired protection again those who denied god. But this very union, new as it was, of state and church, testified the native weakness of the god they worshiped. However, since his existence was at stake, he must be saved, cost what it might. It could not therefore, be otherwise than that the glorious new doctrines attracted the best elements which sought their god in his own works and there found him. Only the ignorant rabble, which had been raised on the bottle of tradition, continued to fill the churches.

"In the face of united opposition, science with irresistible force carried one bulwark of faith after another, and tore the veil from the supposed divine mysteries, by convincing the people of the truth of the laws of nature. Never before did creation stand out so beautifully as it now was in all its nakedness. The priests behaved like madmen, the new teachings were condemned as erroneous, the books in which they were laid down were prohibited, the poor believer who read them was excommunicated.

"The bolts on the dungeon of god were doubled, the old confessions of faith renewed and enlarged, and idolatry practiced the more vigorously. New saints were assigned to heaven, the seats of others, and hence their worship, being raised. Through it all resounded the enraged yelping: "Down with the atheists!"

"Here an ignorant preacher blustered about mercy

and predestination, while beyond the mountains the high-priest sent his ravens into all the regions of Mars, to preach to the people the doctrine of merit and free will. It was thought the current of refractory mind could thus be stopped and destroyed. Barely a faint echo of these endeavors in the field of old religion reached the men of science, who went on calmly cutting the old god to pieces and putting in his place him who regenerates and maintains the world and before whom all men are equal.

"With the greater spread of knowledge the ideas and aspirations of the people grew loftier; its idea of god more beautiful; the lower and more contemptible the priest-made faith. The union of church and state came, in the course of time, to be looked upon by the common man as but the double implement of his slavery. While the people carried the burdens of the favored ones and suffered want, the latter reveled in affluence. Poverty and wealth, misery and debauchery, dominion and slavery, went hand in hand.

"The pennies of the people continued to flow into the coffers of the greedy high-priest, who used them to enrich his relatives and soil the fountains of eternal justice. As the officers of the state belonged to the privileged classes, and in the king's name impoverished and despoiled the people, so the high-priest sold for money dignities and offices, bones of saints, and even the soul of the individual. The doctrine of the master became the stepping-stone to power for vile men.

"The dissembling high-priest concluded agreements, the execution of which by the power of the state, or



even in alliance with persons of different creed, aimed at the suppression of popular liberty and the complete enslavement of the subjects. The ancient, mysterious darkness of tradition was to extinguish the new light of the popular mind—science.

“But the more the people were oppressed and loaded with intolerable burdens, the greater grew their yearning for freedom. Every fresh degradation only dug deeper the grave of dominion by kings and priests. In vain did men of science warn state and church of the coming crash. They turned a deaf ear to the voice of wisdom. The confidence that the armed power of the kings was sufficient to curb any movement for freedom among the people, caused the distinction of classes to stand out the more glaringly. But the notable difference in the mode of life of the one, occasioned a wonderful modification in the belief of the other.

“Like a volcano in the interior of Mars, the long pent-up wrath worked violently in the breast of the enslaved people. Their murmurs became more audible, the pressure from above more acute, the more the minds were inflamed and divided. In its capacity of tried gatherer of all temporal goods, the church was the defender of the mighty and of possession. It stood loyally on the side of the oppressors and preached obedience to the powers that be, contentment with the existing conditions, and fidelity to the god of the unjust. All traces of the noble doctrine of the master were wiped out. On the lips of the married as well as the single men of god, it continued to be distorted, and was turned into a vile weapon of the wicked.

“In opposition to the priests, the men of science

taught that the power of kings was derived solely from the consent of the subjects and did not emanate from god. From the life and the teachings of the master, moreover, they demonstrated strikingly the injustice of the priesthood and the falsity of the prevailing social order. As the disciples of god taught the relation of masters and servants, so they preached liberty and the rights of man. Like lightning from a clear sky flashed the long coveted word 'liberty' and the echo passed the call from land to land, from people to people.

"Of a sudden was discharged the pent-up wrath of centuries. The roles were exchanged. Priests, the state, and god himself, fell victims to the unbridled power of the people. The old institutions collapsed, and in the blood of the slain buried the oppressors of mankind, the injustice of the old state and the infamy of the church. The god of liberty, equality and fraternity, born of this destruction of the existing order, made all things new. Thrones trembled and the cowardly high-priest fled to the mountains.

"The people began to govern themselves. The sun of liberty dried the tears of the liberated and for a time at least stayed the hand of the oppressors. In the newly created state the citizen of the country also was its ruler, and the knowledge of equal rights and equal duties directed the minds of all. In such manner the wrongs committed against the liberties of the people were atoned for. But the human mind, freed at a blow from the darkness of slavery, could not by any possibility grasp at once the pure, noble god of the wise men. And the same popular liberty which buried the old god also gave birth to an immature child. For from the

chaos of the old priest-faith there issued the goddess of reason.

"Thus one extreme always begets another."

Silently the worthy priest had listened to every word uttered by my companion. An unmistakable gravity covered his countenance, and deep wrinkles furrowed his brow.

"You have shaken my faith and deprived me of my peace of mind without filling the void in my heart," he answered slowly, lifting up his eyes moist with tears, "for I regret to confess that your words apply to our Earth. When a youth even my free spirit often revolted against the prevailing doctrine. The fetters of faith seemed unnatural even to me, and nothing but the fear of men prevented me from bursting them asunder. Thus my whole life has been one of incessant struggle. Your words opened up the wounds of the robust man at my advanced age, and my heart bleeds at the thought that I have served a phantom and, therefore, have spent a fruitless and unworthy life.

"Only the care of the souls confided to me affords me comfort. They are innocent and simple in their faith and remain strangers to my struggles. Oh, how often have I wished to be one of them! Whatever may become of me, preserve them in their ignorance! As yet, the plague of this age has not reached any of them, and in their intercourse with nature they have remained pure. Do not destroy their faith and with it their contentment! For their sake alone, my life shall remain what it has been heretofore, an inward struggle and outward pretense. This unfaithfulness to myself

will, I trust, be counterpoised by their happiness and erased from the eternal book of the world spirit.

"I adjure you both, not to expose the confessions of my soul to anyone, for the forces of darkness still live beyond the mountains. Like a hunted deer they would persecute me, nor rest till their curse had withered the grass and flowers upon my grave. For the master's doctrine of love is unknown to them, and implacable hatred alone governs all their actions. You have sketched them true, and I swear to you that their entire texture of lies will forever remain an abomination to me. I meant to convert you, but you have turned my weapon upon me by passing the history of my church in review before my mind. Complete my conversion! If I understand your intimation aright, when you tell how gold was made god, you will describe the conditions of the present day. For, since the old god is dead, there sits in his place the golden calf. It is enthroned upon our altars; it soils the chair of science and the actions of the business man; it defiles the heart of the child as of the old man. Its power dominates rulers and people, rich and poor, servants as well as masters."

## CHAPTER IV.

## HOW GOLD WAS MADE GOD.

We were seated once more on the shaded garden-bench and AlGeber continued his narrative:

"Science had opened the floodgates of nature and never dreamed-of blessings would have poured freely into the lap of nations, had man but known the god of the wise ones and not clouded the new order of things with the right of private ownership.

"Those countries which were governed by the citizens themselves served as models to the princes, and already some rulers did of their own accord what had to be forced from others. Thenceforth the subjects took an important and active part in the government of states.

"But the cradle of liberty lost its guiding star when its people bent their knees to the unknown goddess, and the subsequent fate of this country shows clearly how even the noblest thought may, in the mind of the unwise, bring disaster upon a people and modify and determine the destiny of man.

"The great revolution had indeed cleared the atmosphere and freed the people from their tormentors, but the new deity did not fulfill the expectations of the masses. Bitter disappointment took hold of the popular mind. Man's attempt to realize the god of the

wise ones had yielded a changeling. But there still dwelt in the people the need to recognize a higher being, and so many turned their backs upon the loathsome goddess to again fall helplessly into the arms of the old priest-made god. But even the latter had lost much of his former rigor in the general revolution. His surviving disciples were full of meekness since they had known and felt the strength of the people. Even the high-priest no longer was the hurler of anathemas, as of old, but had become obsequious and conciliatory.

"And while in the eastern part of the land a worthy prince of his own accord liberated all the serfs, the people along the western confines beheld the high-priest beyond the mountains bending his back before subjects and rulers alike. Thus his inventive genius created a new religious doctrine, purified in the crucible of time, of which he himself was to be the very center. The temporal power which had been lost to the people was replaced and enlarged by him in a manner never before thought of. For no sooner was he sure of his ground when, by an act of sheer violence, he made himself the spiritual ruler of men. In this sign he could mold their minds more successfully, for his power was the same everywhere, and his strong arm reached to the uttermost regions of Mars. He was declared infallible.

"But while in the old dominion wise men with incessant labor trained up a young and vigorous generation, greed of wealth grew overwhelmingly in the newly discovered land. In this abyss the precious liberties of the people and the efforts of noble minds

were gradually lost. Here, then, was the favorable field where, under the guise of spiritual power, it was possible to regain temporal dominion. No one would observe it, for all were absorbed in the hunt for the goods of this world. Why not the new church as well?

"As the inheritance of the fathers was taken piece by piece by dishonest greed, from the people, who were not aware of it, the disciples of god, in the meantime, were adding to their wealth and influence day by day. What the greedy predecessors had begun here, their successors faithfully continued and completed under the banner of liberty. In unholy alliance with the slaves of gold they extended their power at the cost of the people. All sources of production were exploited by them, every liberal endeavor was suppressed with their aid. Thus only was it possible to bring to life the ugliest changeling of their doctrine and put gold on the throne of god.

"They preached that it was more blessed to give than to receive, yet emphasized the opposite of their belief by taking so long and so much that nothing remained to the duped people. And here again was the unclean tree known by its fruit. The desire to grow rich as quickly as possible dominated all. Countless wealth was taken from the bowels of the earth, and the number of the people grew apace with their knowledge of the prolific soil. Adventurers from all countries poured into the land to hunt for the elusive gold.

"The sailing vessels of the fathers were placed out of service, and perfect palaces propelled by steam traversed the ocean, making travel lively and secure.

On iron rails powerful engines carried the traveler and his wares in long, splendid trains into the interior. The impenetrable thicket of the forests was cleared. The blows of the ax on the mighty trunks and the hum of steam saws were heavenly music to the industrial pioneer. Canals began to intersect the land, and limitless swamps, the haunts of wild fowl, were turned into cities. Amidst this din was heard the powerful trip-hammer and the whip of the farmer. Thus civilization marched irresistibly on its way.

"Dazed by his new environment, the poor native leaned on his spear, and knew not what befell him. Like the trees upon the patrimony of his fathers he was cut down himself. Did he not stand in the way of true civilization; was he not a heathen in whose welfare the true god took no interest? In devout supplication he raised his hands to the powers that had so long protected him and his. He gazed upon the sun, which still shed his golden radiance at dawn over the mountains of his home. He knew the stars which had so often pointed the way to him and his people, and they were still the same. The gentle moon that had watched many a tender tryst of his youth blinked through the leaves as kindly as of yore. The calmly flowing brook in whose sparkling waters he had so often beheld his own image proved that he had not changed, and the birds greeted him with the same jubilant songs. The gentle murmurs of the air still carried to his soul the old harmonies of nature. And yet he felt transformed, he knew not how! Trembling with dread before the suspended ax of fate, he withdrew, awe-stricken and timid, into the depths of his



forests. Farther and farther from the dear old home he wandered across the broad land, leading his hungry children. His poor wife had naught but the tears of a mother's love to satisfy the cravings of her babe, for like himself the hunted deer had fled before the lowering storm. At times he would halt, and with unquenchable hate in his heart, try to defend the sacred soil of his fathers against the bold intruders. And then, perhaps, the white man, who had been carried too far by his greed, would be found dead in the primeval forest with an arrow in his breast.

"But woe to the poor savage and his tribe if the vengeance of powder and ball struck him! What was he but a common murderer that must not escape the white man's justice? Thus has man ever colored his own wrong since priest-made faith promulgated the doctrine that heretics have no rights. And those who despoiled the red man were descendants and disciples of the priests. The common property of the natives was lost in the sanctity of private ownership, as soon as the powerful priest-creed in the guise of modern civilization had vanquished the poor aborigines and their god.

"And yet, the red man was created in the image of the same god that the white man worshiped, and the teachings of the noble master extended to him with equal force. But the master was dead and did not know the circumstances! And how could greed be a companion of love if it would thereby be deprived of the fruit of its depravity? Where, as in this case, a higher civilization was imposed on the lower, it was impossible to yield, and impracticable to love one's

neighbor. The weak must give way to the strong as the arrow to the bullet. And what could not be accomplished by main strength was completed by cunning.

"Thus following close upon the heels of the new god of culture and of powder and ball came rum and whisky, and while in the pliable mind of the native youth the old god yielded to the new through the influence of the priests, the fathers fell victims to these insidious beverages. After the rightful owners of the land were despoiled and expelled, the cultured robber was generous enough to provide for those whom he had stripped of their rights. And while the rich revelled in the possession of their ill-gotten wealth, the deluded people—themselves no longer free—contributed to protect the red man from hunger, that he might not arise and demand restitution of his stolen heritage. In that way charitable institutions were erected by the state, in which those who had been forcibly deprived of their patrimony were permitted to sicken, decay and die under the protection of a higher civilization. But by this very means the wrongs of the individual were hedged about with legal sanction, and, though the people did not suspect it, this charitable practice was destined to benefit themselves at a later period. For the spoliation of the red man was but the prologue of the awful tragedy to which gradually the white man was subjected by his brother.

"In a burst of generosity black slavery was abolished, but, in obedience to political intrigue, the ignorant beings thus liberated were placed on an equal footing with the white man. With their assistance the

priests and wealthy men of the land at last succeeded in forging the fetters of slavery upon the whole people.

"The increase of population leading to a more thorough exploitation of the sources of production, it was but the inevitable result of existing conditions that by degrees the stronger robbers forced the property and persons of the weaker ones into their service. Having profited by the murder and spoliation of the natives, they were not satisfied with this result until the last remaining trace of popular liberty was lost and nine-tenths of the people reduced to abject slavery. How this was possible under the laws of the land is so curious a phenomenon that I am moved to describe to you the beautiful political constitution of its people.

"Refusing to pay unjust taxes to the mother country, the fathers succeeded after a severe struggle in conquering their freedom. Liberty, equality and fraternity were the pillars on which the new popular government was erected. Only in the recognition of these principles was the injustice of the old order confirmed. From the righteous disobedience of the fathers sprang a union of states in which it was held as a self-evident truth that all men were created free and equal, and that the creator had endowed them with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The laws of nature and of nature's god afforded ample justification for the separate and equal position of this people among the powers of Mars. But as this power derived from the consent of the citizens could subsist only as long as it safeguarded their sacred rights, it might be destroyed as soon as it ran counter to them.

"With these purposes in view, provision was made for the administration of justice, to insure domestic tranquillity, to provide for the common defense of the land, and to transmit the blessings of liberty to future generations. How complete was the failure you will see in a little while. Again it was the barbaric notions of ownership that interfered with the aspirations of the people and led to the destruction of equality among them. Had the state remained the owner of the soil, the individual citizen would have been unable to overreach his fellow-man. With equal opportunities, rights and duties would have remained equal, and the state would have been able to maintain a balance of the burdens imposed.

"Now, however, there was no limit to the transgressions of the strong, while the spoliation of the weak was sanctioned by the laws themselves. Two hostile principles were thus introduced into the body politic, the further development of which was neither justified by the constitution of the country, nor based upon the eternal laws of nature. This changeling was the offspring of greed, which in turn was a child of the old priest-made faith. Their god had favorite children—why should not the state raise a brood of them? Two classes were thus developed, one owning all that the other created.

"The same law which protected the possession of the one also prohibited the acquisition by the others, who were thus thrown wholly upon the mercy of a few. And all this happened under the constitution of the country just as easily as though the cornerstone of the structure had been despotic instead of republi-

can. Like the wealthy, the poor man took his commodity—his labor—to market. But even there he was outdone. Means having been found to appropriate all inventions and thus minimize the cost of production by their use, measures were also devised to overcrowd the labor market and acquire the goods there offered at constantly diminished rates. Labor was said to be the sweetening of life, so the working-man must be satisfied and ought to be glad to have an opportunity to work! This was the gospel that was taught the child at school, the youth in the counting-room, the father in the factory, and all without exception at church.

“Prior to that time, money was but the customary medium of exchange. It now began to rule everybody and everything, determine values, and measure civic virtue and the rights of man. The dollar became almighty and practiced what the god of old had done. If its rights were questioned, the thunder of its power rolled across the land and annihilated the disobedience of its wicked children. Woe to him who attacked or refused to worship it! The judgment of god upon him! Head over heels these unworthy beings flung themselves into the abyss of avarice. The natural consequence of their ignoble greed was that many dropped along the roadside, sacrificed to a misdirected civilization and false god-worship. No one heard their cry of pain and onward sped the furious train. Each would be nearest to the new deity, and, while some were successful, the greater part of the people perished in the attempt. The noblest achievements of science served the new god, who permeated all like the plague.

Never before did man pray to the old god with fervor so great as were the loathsome ecstasies with which the worshipers of gold were seized. In its possession man had found at last the proper center of his destination. Gold was the divining rod by which everything was made possible; the divine seed which fructified the heart of man like rank weeds. The god-man shudders when he takes up the books that describe the period known to us as the age of designing hypocrisy. Never before did man fall so low.

"But listen!

"As in an earlier age the wise counselor of a prince managed to store up in the spacious granaries of his state the abundance of one year for the scarcity of the next, withdrawing the products of nature, of industry and science from the greed and over-reaching of individuals, and yet keeping them available to the needs of the people, in like manner the rich were enabled during this period to attract the furtive gold within their own possession, and by its aid determine the values of all products.

"After they had once succeeded in making gold the only standard of value it was an easy matter to manipulate all the sources of wealth and their products. A peculiar tribe of men was thus developed, whose sole endeavor it was to force values up and down. Their skill in making the golden standard visible or putting it out of sight at will was the foundation of their despotic power, by which they were enabled methodically to despoil the people and the land. Not satisfied with the prolific yield of their knavery, the disciples of this art even began to trade in non-exist-

ing values. Then their exchanges became veritable barometers where the credulous could see the power of gold without perceiving the cunning rogues behind the scenes. As in former times the disciples of god were wont to hawk around pardons and indulgences for money whereby miracles were expected to be wrought, so the disciples of the exchanges robbed all who came within reach of their barometer. Real values were doubled or multiplied a hundredfold over night according to the state of the manipulated barometer.

"One man sold wheat which was not yet grown, while another passed finely printed parchments which had not the slightest value. The dream of one man would be realized by another. The truly honest and genuine industrial operations were stifled in the falsity of speculation.

"How the fish did bite!

"What had its beginning in the products of nature and human industry reached its full height when the conquests of science were made tributary to the god of the age.

"To put new ideas into practical execution money was needed, and this only the wealthy possessed. In this way, however, were the modern means of transportation established, telephones made possible, the electric force put in harness and steam utilized practically. The law confirmed the undisputed first right of the rich man to these achievements. This knowledge, also, was turned by him into a means of acquiring wealth. He alone was entitled to direct productive activity. The parchments he sold and by which

the ignorant expected to obtain an interest in certain industries were as worthless as the solemn pardons of the priests of old, and remained subject to the power of the rich man as they were continually exposed to his manipulations. What promised well at night burst in the morning like a soap bubble, for it was the child of falsehood and collapsed by its own hollowness. 'Sell all things, hold fast that which is good,' was the law of the rich man, and no one knew the hollow nuts better than he did. Thus he handled his wealth as the juggler does the balls. And what he once began was repeated with growing frequency.

"At an earlier period some shrewd disciples of gold had induced the people to donate to them immense tracts of land and to advance vast sums of money for the construction of railroads. Had those favored ones been honest their enterprise should have succeeded. But as they had defrauded their fellow-men, so the state also fared at their hands. The lands were sold and the proceeds used to build new roads to compete with the first one and thus gradually deprive it of its income. The people grumbled, but they were simply told that the old enterprise did not pay because it was premature. The people be d—d!

"Meanwhile, however, these speculators had succeeded in making millions out of the sale of fraudulent securities, while the pretty parchments were faithfully hoarded by the credulous people. And then the crash came over night, and the whole house of cards built in dishonesty tumbled down. The poor lost the savings of a lifetime, while the wealthy scoundrel simply smiled—and reorganized his devilish undertak-



ing. No rich man was ashamed to entice the people into swindling schemes by allowing the use of his name and thousands were thus lost, part of the stolen profits going to the schemer. This was called superior smartness.

"Proofs of these infamous transactions are still preserved in our museums to-day, and they are sufficient in themselves to bear eloquent testimony of the utter corruption of the age.

"One shrewd man succeeded by dark means in acquiring all the oil wells of the country, while others supplied gas and water at exorbitant rates. Even the coal in the mountains fell gradually into their hands. No road was safe from these wolves; no industry but was poisoned by their pestilential breath; no means was too vile to carry out their designs. For with gold everything could be bought, animate or inanimate. The representatives of the people in the halls of legislation, the scholar in the chair of the university, the judge upon the bench, the priest at the altar of god—they all heard its sweet tinkle and pricked up their ears if it sounded near them. Honesty and candor were laughed at, the poor man who was so unfortunate as not to own anything became a beast of burden; the rich man shrugged his shoulders at him in contempt; the priest blessed all who paid him, and above them all the old god scoffed at the impotence of his creation.

"Wealth held them all captive and from sheer tedium became the benefactor of the poor creatures who lifted the mighty hammer of industry only to be crushed beneath its blows. As a dog greedily licks up the crumbs that fall from the table and is happy to have a

master, so this modern civilization created hospitals, insane asylums and jails by which those who remained sound in body and mind were rid of the offscourings of the time. Even institutions of learning were founded by the pious men who had appropriated the oil wells, the gas supply and the coal beds. There the rising generation learned to know and honor their benefactors. Others who had become rich by trading in meat and wheat followed the noble example and erected schools in which the goodness of god and his chosen ones was incessantly kept before the eyes of the people. Men who had made much money by selling silks and other articles went so far as to build museums in which were exhibited the achievements of the period for the delectation of the poor. There everybody could see what progress man had made under the influence and with the aid of the new god-idea. Of these fountains the disinherited were permitted to drink their fill and acquire fresh courage for a harder fate. For the new benefactors were far from building institutions of learning, schools and museums out of their own pockets. Oil, gas, flour and coal were made dearer without any honest reason, and the people could have made a perfect paradise out of what was thus taken from them. And to fill the measure of unhappiness for the poor their wages were cut down. If the people grumbled and tried to take revenge upon their tormentors, they were answered with god, the law and soldiers.

"And the more the rich man amassed, the more protection he required. For his sake part of the people were frequently compelled to become murderers of

friends and brothers, or to fall themselves by their hands. What were the people good for if they could not be molded to suit one's whims?

"In such manner fate was preparing a grewsome future for this country. Signs of the coming storm already began to gather over the horrified heads. The soil was drenched with the blood of innocence, and the spirit of rebellion was stretching its wings. The poor, compelled by dire need, were driven in droves like hungry beasts into the dens of industry, whence at evening, black with soot and weary in mind and body, they went home to wife and children, carrying their scant wages. The little ones cried for bread; the wrinkled face of the mother saw with anguish how it boiled and seethed in the breast of the beloved husband. He was withholding a secret from her, but she dreaded to question him. Later on comrades called for him, and what was then discussed behind closed doors only made him more close-mouthed. His eyes flashed mysteriously when he looked at his poor children and the brawny arm twitched involuntarily as though about to strike. So things remained for a long time. He had only gathered himself up and lay crouching for the leap. Why should he go on living like this? He asked himself the question and before his eyes sparkled bright the constitution of his country. He looked up to the employer, but that worthy shrugged his shoulders in contempt, while the priest of god referred him to his religion. And the state, his own handiwork, applauded all that helped its corrupt servants to obtain gold. For the poor, justice had only penalties; for the rich, only rewards. The man who paralyzed

whole industries was allowed to reorganize under the protection of the law, but he who stole a loaf of bread to save his wife and family from starvation was condemned to suffer punishment.

The example of the masters soon found imitation among the servants. Thousands of workmen pledged themselves by solemn oath to put an end to the prevailing disorder and promote the welfare of those dependent upon them. The rich man looked upon the proposed measures with contempt and seemed at a loss to account for the workers' rebellion. He pretended that competition was ruinous so that he worked at a loss, and continued his business only to keep the dear workmen employed. He begged, he agitated, he threatened. But the workman was no longer to be cajoled and demanded higher wages and shorter hours that he might live like a human being with his family. He is refused, and laying aside his blouse he rakes out the fires. But the heartless man brings in other slaves to carry on his business. At this the poor breadless one loses all patience, he is turned into a wild beast, and the house of industry breaks down with a crash. No fires are started, not a hammer stirs, and the rich man for the first time has to reckon with the new power.

"He intrenches himself behind the law and god, calls to his aid the armed force of the people, and it is granted to him. A volley of lead—screaming mothers and children—a few fathers slain—and the sky clears. The law has conquered.

"A black hearse—children dissolved in grief—men impotently clenching their fists—a whining priest—and

the grave closes over the remains of the murdered victim. His struggle is ended.

"Leading her children, clad in rags, the deserted wife goes begging from house to house until the higher civilization shuts her out from the eyes of the indignant rich man. The poorhouse is open to her. The children are taken from her because it is deemed the duty of the state to educate them. The mother dies of grief. Unwept, she is laid in the cold earth. No monument marks the spot, no inscription tells the tale of her woe. The grave covers all.

"The daughter blossoms like a fresh rose. Her bright eye knows no wrong, and she falls a victim to the lust of the rich man's son. She, too, has been provided for.

"To the right hand the den of vice, to the left the refuge for erring women. She may choose for herself which fate is the better of the two.

"Shall I tell you more? But you are weeping as though your heart would break.

"Very well, I shall say no more.

"The first onslaught had passed by. But the thunder-clouds of impending disaster still hung threatening in the sky. Still the rich man sucked the life-blood from the people—his idle son seduced their youthful maidens. Even the possessing class split up into groups separated by the greater or less amount of wealth. The whole idle brood having nothing to do began to look up their family trees, and the so-called blue-blooded ones banded closer together. In this occupation they are reported to have developed

great proficiency, but the matter is so trifling that I may pass it over.

"The millions having been counted and the family tree arranged in proper order, the wives of these vulgar, coarse upstarts took their daughters to the marriage market.

"Some titled remnant of the ancient feudal barons was purchased for a husband. They sought high connections. As they had neither strength nor intelligence, it is shrewdly surmised by some of our scientists that the present tribe of monkeys on Mars is descended from them. But the scientists are not agreed on this point, many maintaining that they were but the connecting link between the half-man and brute creation, which opinion is not without strong support.

"Such degeneration within three generations could be derived only from the false civilization of the period. It was a common occurrence that the father who had sprung from the robust common people left behind an unworthy son as the slavish servant of corrupt business enterprises. Even priests of god kept the claws of avarice scantily hidden beneath the hypocritical sheepskins, and deluded the faithful with dishonest schemes. They pretended to extract gold from the briny water of the sea, and cheated many. Companies were formed that existed only through the credulity of the people whom they humbugged. The greed of gold enticed thousands away from home to the barren ice-fields of the far north, where they lost not only all they possessed, but their misspent lives as well.

"The preparation of adulterated food and injurious

beverages became a protected, powerful industry. And what the big robbers had left to the people, these penny-scrappers were glad to relieve them of. They were satisfied to share their spoils with the priests of god. Fraud, bribery, cunning and hypocrisy became the ruling vices that sought by slander to smother all noble efforts, as a bombastic theology full of deceit and falsehood had smothered the true religion in the hearts of a majority of the people.

"You ask, why did not the government of the people prevent all this, and what became of the god of these half-men? You shall learn. The tendency of the period was becoming clear to the vision of all. But the government of the people as well as the prevailing religious belief was without strength and stale, like the people themselves, who had been despoiled of the very marrow of their bones. The thinking citizen looked about him for a remedy and the workman began to prepare for a desperate struggle against vested wrong. The disinherited slaves united for mutual protection, and the law of self-preservation and the sacred rights of man began to shine forth brightly from the mist of environment. The people became confident of their power when they found what an insignificant number of legally protected robbers were opposed to them. They meant to organize as a powerful party and thus take hold of the government. Leaders, hitherto of unquestioned integrity held the reins with practiced hand, and in powerful speech exposed the existing evils. Success seemed assured. The corrupt servants of the people were called to account for their misdeeds, and the

rich trembled with fear of the coming judgment. But the judgment came not.

"As though struck by lightning from a clear sky, the new-born power suddenly collapsed. Pale with horror, the disinherited stared at each other. What was it that had disturbed their union, and why did they scatter in cowardly fear like a flock of sheep? Again it was gold. Betrayed by the leaders and deserted by weak comrades, the ranks became thinned. Not a shot was fired; no one had been wounded by the thrust of a bayonet. Thus the power of the people was destroyed at one blow by bribing the leaders and threatening the privates. Coined gold in the hands of a few cunning rogues sufficed to bring this about. A dishonest leader was rewarded for his treachery with permanent provision by the state, and the deluded people returned of necessity to the dens of industry. The priest of god sang scores of hallelujahs and praised the righteous god who in his infinite care had saved the people by the aid of the rich. The dishonest servant of the people, the treacherous leader of the disinherited and the noble man of wealth were lauded by the hypocritical servants of god as the saviors of the country, because they had prevented the threatened rebellion, the shedding of human blood, and the destruction of sacred property. And all this could have been done with thirty pieces of silver! What a pity there was such a waste of gold!

"Once more the law had conquered and the rich man felt elevated in his own opinion. The people's power lay prostrate and ruined, and dull indifference took hold of the popular mind. But the fire of discontent



continued to smolder beneath the ragged garments of the disinherited. They had not yet lost all hope, and very soon the spark of liberty again blazed brightly to heaven. Now it was time to protect the accumulated wealth by unjust laws. Old measures were made more stringent, and new means found to hold the working people powerless. The lines were drawn closer within which the disinherited were allowed to move, while the industrial reins were gathered up tighter.

"The result of the existing order was the constriction of popular liberty within artificial bounds. From this limitation arose all that was called misery, sin, and crime. Whoever wanted to live naturally collided with the law, and whoever collided with it was crushed. There being no equal relation of rights, it followed that duties must differ also. And that is what they called justice.

"In an unjust conspiracy with the ruling powers, the rich thus sneered at the same law which condemned the poor. All the sources of livelihood were within the iron grasp of a few, and the workman began to be superfluous. The machine which he invented supplanted his work tenfold, and was cheaper. Thousands begged for work, but the hypocritical monopolist had none for them. The distress among the people became general. Begging grew apace, the poorhouses received fresh additions, and the hospitals were overcrowded. But woe to him that tried to help himself, for he committed a crime and went to jail! Those whose will-power was unable to bear the misery committed suicide and left behind half-starved

wives and children for whom the benevolent state provided shelter and graves.

"And while all this happened, the protected monopolist sat in his palace on soft cushions and indulged in nameless vices. He defrauded the state, despoiled the people and scoffed at god. Still he managed to keep up appearances and take his bright light from under the bushel. Being barren of justice, he filled out this void of his nature with the virtues of the pharisees and scribes. In this spirit the monopolist scattered his wealth with an open hand. He built churches, gave to the poor, assisted reform movements, and even danced for charity. His kindness was on every tongue and his name headed every list for the alleviation of misery.

"The bribed servant of the people, the corrupt scientist in the professor's chair, and the hypocritical priest of god were full of his praise. They lived by him and enriched themselves with his wealth. But the people accepted his crumbs gratefully because they were compelled to. His humanity could not be contained within his own country, it reached to the remotest corners of Mars, where, with his money wrung from the people, missions were established to convert poor, benighted heathens and cannibals. For these low creatures also must know the god of civilization and become themselves civilized men. With tears in his eyes he read the reports about these godless ones, and in a choking voice inquired what was needed to elevate them. Nothing but money. And this he subscribed, and became pleasing to god in the eyes of the pharisees and scribes.

"Thus he freely helped all he could to draw the mote from the eye of his fellow-men, never thinking of the beam in his own.

"But he was not a follower of the good master, for he could not give up his riches. Nor did the disciples of god demand it. And yet they pretended to serve the master. As the righteousness of wealth was derived from the teachings of the priests, so did the hypocrisy of the rich necessitate the slavery and dependency of all who came within reach of their power.

"A race of servile dissemblers was the result, and all of them revolved around the rich man and his wealth as the wheel around the axle. What he commanded must be done. For him laws were made and perjury was committed, as brother would betray brother in his behalf. Thus his influence extended to everything and everybody. Woe to the scientist who rose against him! Woe to the priest who dared tell the truth! Woe to the people if they failed to acknowledge the benefits of wealth! The judgment of god upon the wicked ones! They were denied benevolence and placed outside the pale of wealth's favor; and they were persecuted and outlawed, for they had blasphemed the anointed of the lord. And all the slavish hirelings cried Amen!

"Thus the corruption of wealth was transmitted to a large part of the people, the more they became dependent upon the rich element. It came to pass that he was laughed at who even spoke of honesty. How could one run counter to the prevailing fashion? The state, the business world, the servants of god, and many scientists, all were more or less diseased with the plague of the age. At times, the people would rouse

themselves and try to remedy the evil, and then it happened that the judge who sentenced the dishonest official was the same that had previously sought to bribe him in order to obtain office. In this manner the guilty conscience often punished the man who suffered from the prevailing disease.

"But here and there voices were raised even among the rich against the evils of the day. The more the sources of production and livelihood came to be united in the hands of a few, the smaller became the number of those who earned anything. Men of science uncovered the injustice and frauds of monopoly, fearless priests took sides with the people; honest statesmen pointed warningly to the future. Then the people began to breathe once more and thought of liberty.

"As was ever the fate of noble men, so it happened at that time to the champions of the disinherited. The pious man who alone had the right to sell oil expelled the teacher of the young from his chair. The church disciplined the disobedient priest who had dared attack vested rights and the sanctity of the prevailing principles of property. The people were incited by foul words of slander against the honest statesman who dared be their champion. But the masses remained true to their teachers. A new powerful party spread over the whole land and made itself felt in the halls of legislation. Confirmed sinners against the liberties of the people were called to account, and fresh, purer blood was sent through the languid veins of the body politic.

"Even the alien high-priest whined from afar that the monopoly of capital in the means of production had

caused the misery of the age, by imposing upon the people a yoke little short of slavery. As on previous occasions, he was shrewd enough this time also to serve two masters simultaneously, to catch two birds in one net, and yet remain master of both. For after discovering that sin was the prime cause of all misery, it was easy for him to maintain that religion was capable of providing a perfect remedy from within. Thus he left it to everybody to seek salvation after his own fashion.

"But he knew the people better than the rich men of the land, for several of his predecessors had felt its power, and he shuddered when he read the bloody history of his church. It was the part of wisdom to display a friendly disposition toward the people.

"Responsive to the influence of noble men, the people awoke from their dull brooding and presented their just demands to the powers of the land. Honesty in the administration of public affairs, the abolition of all monopolies, equal taxation, the prohibition of dishonest speculation, and a sufficiency of honest money like the fathers were wont to have, those were the modest desires of the oppressed people. No honest state would have denied them. But whereas money had a fictitious fixed value, all other property had depreciated one-half. A minority, insignificant in numbers, possessed all the valuable gold, while the great body of the people was heavily in debt. And now the debtor wanted to turn the tables! Unheard-of audacity! That was nothing less than theft! It was a bare-faced attempt to depreciate gold and pay the debts with inferior money! Who could have expected such a thing

of a civilized, honest people? Usurers, speculators and other rich sharpers folded their hands in holy horror. 'You will drive capital from your midst and defraud your benefactors,' such was the cry of the monopolists in all parts of Mars. The press of the land vied in lies and misrepresentations of the true state of affairs; and the gold of the rich man, the corruption of officials, and the ignorance of the people did the rest. Conventional honesty carried the day and tried to make the country happy by additional taxation. But even now the evil work had grown beyond the control of those men. The people grew poorer, the monopolist richer. True to their traditions, the disciples of god fought on the side of the leeches as in former ages. However, the victory was in reality a defeat, for the eyes of the people were opened and they no longer believed the prevaricators. The heaviest guns of the gold power had been fired, and still the poverty of the people grew apace.

"A desire became general that the state take possession of all the sources of production and regulate them in the interest of the people, and that any proposed laws be submitted to them for final approval. The situation became more precarious for the monopolists day by day, and many thought the end was at hand. But the resources of wealth were not yet exhausted. And so monopoly hit upon a ruse by which it was thought to divert the reflections of the discontented from their own condition.

"To the south of this country a people that had degenerated under the misrule of the old priests had wealthy possessions. The natives had grown weary of

the tyranny of their tormentors and rose in a war of independence. Almost incredible were the authenticated reports of the cruelty and injustice of the rulers of these men. Starvation and disease had carried off many thousands of them, and the weapon of the murderer was busy among the living. Was it not an imperative demand of humanity that a free people help them to liberty? First, they were to be supplied with provisions and afterward freed from their undesirable rulers. Finally, they were to govern themselves. The people were captivated by this plan, and in thinking of the sufferings of others, they forgot their own misery. The beat of the drum was heard through the land, weapons clanked and flashed, and amid the blessings of the hypocrites the youth of the land went to war for humanity and the rights of man. All fictitious values trembled and quaked in the mother country until the first news of victory flashed over the wire. Verily, capital is timid.

"The thunder of artillery was still rolling, the small fire of the rifles still rattling, when the rich at home began to concoct plans for the successful spoliation and plundering of the new acquisitions. Humanity was thrown to the winds, and the unfortunates who had been huddled together in narrow inclosures were suffered to starve.

"No one cared for them, no one gave them any further thought, since native greed overshadowed all. Not content with this accomplishment, they starved their own youths who had offered their lives for the state. Like shades returned from the realm of death, the survivors came back, only to fall victims to disease,

They, too, were martyrs of humanity. Everything was hushed up as well as might be, and the youths with the ghastly eyes were glorified as conquerors. The disciples of god spoke feelingly from their pulpits about an all-wise providence and the manifest destiny of this mighty people, the statesman shouted himself hoarse about projects of expansion, the scholar shook his head and was scoffed at, while the people looked on in dumb indifference and buried their dead. The poor man alone bore the loss, and, at last, paid the enormous bill. The war of liberation became a war of conquest which consumed millions and brought naught but misery in its train. Thus, even the much lauded idea of humanity only contributed to accelerate the gradual decay of the existing order.

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“A hundred years had gone by since the mother country brought itself to acknowledge that the former rich colony was irretrievably lost. The people had attempted to govern themselves and jumped from the frying-pan into the fire. Their government was come to be the pliable tool of a dangerous money despotism, which compelled all with a hand of iron into the compass of its power. But as the bow when bent too far will break, so it happened with the gold power. The patience of the people had been put to a test which was too severe, and the rebound came sooner than was looked for.

“The strong military force created by the war of humanity was looked to by the rich for an ally to keep



down any rising in favor of liberty. A false sense of security took hold of the rulers, and the sagacious teachers of the people were left undisturbed. By hypocritical reform movements the masses were sought to be kept divided and the festering sores on the social body covered up. But it was forgotten that the sons under arms sprang from the people and felt that their rights and liberties lay bound upon the altar of greed. So it came to pass that the very weapon which the rich claimed for themselves turned out the salvation of the state and assisted the people to claim their sacred rights.

"The same declaration of independence which had aided the fathers to win liberty, once more inspired the enthusiasm of the people and achieved a decisive victory. The gold of the briber exerted its power in vain upon the wholesome integrity of the leaders of the people, and a holy, healthy atmosphere swept over the land from ocean to ocean. The people took the reins of government into their hands and entered upon the possession of their own. It was the first time within the memory of man that justice was allowed free scope. The monopolists had thought to frustrate the popular will with the aid of the army, but the military stood loyally by the people and surrendered the arch-conspirators to the courts of justice. The leaders of the government called the best men of the country to the capital of the land to give the benefit of their wise counsel, and they were charged to examine into the causes of the existing evils and report to the representatives of the people for the purpose of enabling them to provide suitable remedies.

"One of my ancestors was elected by the assembled scholars and scientists to preside over these memorable deliberations. For years he had by word and deed condemned the ruling elements and enjoyed the confidence of the people to the fullest extent. With keen attention the people followed the course of the deliberations, while many monopolists hastily fled the country, fearing justice and foreseeing the results. Crash now followed crash, and the dishonest values crumbled into dust. Sad visaged speculators ran about the country like madmen, begging, praying and calling down the vengeance of god upon the men of the people. But their despair moved no one. Before the report of the investigating commission was transmitted to the representatives of the people, the sky had cleared. The false had given room to the true, the credit humbug evaporated into smoke, the dens of the robbers were deserted. The old god was stricken dumb, and his disciples, speechless with fear, were hiding from the vengeance of the people. Many of them believed the end of the world was at hand and threatened the people with the direst punishment of their god. False prophets of a false god! Nature lay in peace, and the sun went on shedding his genial rays over the righteous as well as the wicked. Not a breath of air stirred. So the people remained tranquil and full of confidence.

It was a beautiful day in May of the year 7981, when the report of the wise men was submitted to the representatives of the people. In the legislative halls, as well as in the remotest hamlets in the land, it created the liveliest satisfaction. And inasmuch as this event marks the beginning of our present moral freedom

from artificial restrictions, the wording of this beautiful document may perhaps be of use to you also.

It reads as follows:

"Fully alive to the woes of the time and with a view of promoting the mutual welfare, at the direction of the leaders of the people, we have searched the destructive torrent of existing misery to its fountain-head, and hereby solemnly declare the prevailing god-idea to be the prime cause of all evil."

"For from the time when the spirit was made flesh to the period when gold was made god upon Mars, its course is a continuous chain of injustice, whereby it has degraded all that is noble and lowered the image of the creator."

"By teaching fear of god, it set man at variance with the eternal architect of the universe, and laid the foundation of slavery."

"It is the false author of all phantoms and will-o'-the-wisps that led mankind into the bottomless swamp of theology, and suffered it to perish therein."

"It handed the hemlock to the philosopher, built the chamber of torture, and lighted the fires around the stake. It erected both hell and heaven."

"It created slaves in order to breed rulers, believers in order to fetter the mind, and god in order to call the devil into being."

"All its works sprang from vanity and greed, its disciples disfigure the formations of the creator, and their teachings make god himself an object of scorn and derision. Such is the soil on which the present order of things thrive. Our fathers knew this when they based their independence upon

the god of nature and his laws. What they then did we can to-day but repeat and confirm..”

“When the state, founded upon the declaration of the free-men, stripped itself of its own soil, it at once destroyed the the three chief principles of every just social order, and laid the foundation of all the injustice that followed.”

“That was the beginning of our misery. Thenceforth everything followed the prescribed paths of the god of the church and of slavery, until nine-tenths of the people bore all duties and burdens, while one-tenth enjoyed all rights and privileges.”

“In order, therefore, to create a just relation of things and to promote the common welfare, we propose that the god of nature, which alone is in harmony with the principles of science, be taught the people. All measures enacted into law, to be just, must agree with the eternal laws of nature.”

“All lands shall be restored to the state, which shall rent them out at fixed annual rentals to the citizens, in such manner and degree as may be deemed consistent with the natural equality of all individuals. Such rentals, however, shall in no year exceed ten per cent. of the income of the lands, and shall be payable in money or in kind.”

“All industries, means of transportation, and those inventions which have degenerated into agencies of extortion and ruin shall be regulated or operated by the state in the interest of the people.”

“Coin shall be the lawful general medium of exchange for all things, and its value shall be kept in a proper relation with the acknowledged values of all other commodities. Only when the welfare of the people requires, shall the value of money as at first determined be readjusted.”

"Speculation in non-existing values or products shall be strictly prohibited."

"All existing debts are based more or less upon injustice, and they shall therefore be adjusted to conform to present values, or canceled, as the case may require."

"The limits of individual possession and wealth shall be fixed by law."

"The education of the young is the proper care of the state only, which is also charged with the welfare of all citizens."

"The divine ordination of the priests as intermediaries, or otherwise, is a lie, and their office is hereby abolished."

"All crimes rest in the nature of him who commits them, as the nature of the individual, in turn, is conditioned by the existing social order. This class shall be given over to the care of science, until, by natural selection, a higher race shall have been created and degeneration eradicated. The taking of liberty, or life, shall be ordered only if the commission of learned men created for that purpose shall pronounce the individual in question incapable of moral advancement, or if his body is a freak of nature."

"Both sexes shall enjoy equal rights under the law."

"The state labor commission shall subject the capacities of the individual citizen for the various industries and arts to a thorough examination, and promote the same accordingly."

"Marriage, as now prescribed and practiced, is unjust and shall be abolished. A certificate of mental and physical soundness and agreement of both parties must be produced before such a union may be concluded."

"The liberty of the citizen shall not be encroached upon in any way, except as herein indicated."

"The state shall constantly endeavor to elevate natural morals. The adulteration of food and the manufacture of injurious beverages shall be prohibited."

"There are no saints, and the beatification of a dead citizen, simply because his moral nature enabled him to be superior to others, shall be prohibited."

"All the expenditures of the state must be covered by the revenues from the leased lands, and the industries, means of transportation and inventions acquired and regulated by it in the interest of the people."

"The surplus of the annual revenues shall be used to improve the condition of the people and the land."

"In every period of fifty years the state shall undertake a general equalization, suiting the existing wealth to the achievements of said period."

"Any citizen who shall refuse to recognize the constitution based upon these principles shall be free to seek another home, and, in case of refusal, shall be compelled to do so."

"All nations that fail to recognize the justice of these principles shall be excluded from intercourse with the people."

"In no other way will it be possible to elevate man uniformly, and to preserve the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"The accomplishment of these ends we leave to the representatives of the people."

In pursuance of the articles of the wise men, the representatives of the people at once proceeded to pass

laws, and the regenerated popular government became an accomplished fact. There followed a wholesale migration of the discontented. Thousands of the disciplined monopolists, priests and those who aped and served them in all things left the country.

But the true wealth remained. Beyond the ocean conspiracies were hatched looking to the overthrow of the new republic. The combined wealth of the planet for the first time stood united against the irresistible strength of the people. Threats were unavailing, since the power of the princes consisted in the armed force of the people, to whom the echo of the new liberty had a pleasing sound, and who now threatened to upset the old order at home. So they must needs accept the inevitable. The rule of gold was annihilated and a new, glorious age dawned in the robust vigor of youth. To the ennobling influence of science alone is due the glory of having lighted the way by which man became god."

## CHAPTER V.

## HOW MAN WAS MADE GOD.

You smile and think I am dreaming. I assure you it happened just as I say. The people were filled to nausea with empty promises, and riper for the change than even the most ardent enthusiast was ready to believe. The prophetic spirit of a few had touched them and prepared the way, and the naked truth caused no dread. The monopolist and his injustice had united all the sources of production, so the transition was simple. That is what finally realized this ideal state.

That many objected is but natural. It had become second nature for them to have sport with the people, so they clung to the belief that the people were not in earnest. Their disappointment was intense when they found what power was at the disposal of the majority. You can form a good idea of the conditions if I tell you that half the people were insured against fire, accident and even death. Private companies had been reaping immense profits from these enterprises and kept a majority of the insured in continual distress for money. The new state continued these institutions and further developed them, equalizing the interests of all. The life of the millionaire was weighed equally with that of the laborer, and the surplus so obtained was used for the benefit of the uninsured. The sav-



ings of the people were not exposed to robbers in the treasury of the state, and multiplied amazingly. Neither the farmer nor the business man was any longer victimized by the dishonest manipulations of boomers, speculators or railroad kings, and the state transported merchandise and products at cost price, as it had formerly done letters. There was no over-production, and prices were kept in balance.

No wonder that theft, murder, perjury and dishonesty disappeared. Sneaks, frauds and hypocrites perished along with the institutions of private property. By the removal of the cause the effects formerly produced by it also vanished, and many laws became superfluous. The greatest care was devoted to the rising generation, for it was here all the hopes for the future centered. Since the old god had been abolished, his servants also went out of sight, the churches were deserted, or became lecture halls for the men of science. The simple, equable doctrine of nature and its immutable, eternal laws performed wonders, for the older people also were able to take part in the teachings, their working hours occupying only a small part of the day. Barely fifty years had elapsed, and the fruits of the new order began to appear. The people became stronger and healthier since the first care was devoted to their physical needs. The degenerate products of the old order were kept apart, and the state took loving care of these unfortunate victims of a misdirected civilization, so that many who had despaired, recovered their mental health in the environment of happiness. There was an end of the care for one's daily bread,

and each was intent upon elevating himself intellectually and morally.

"With the old disorder were buried all the numerous evils to which the people had been subject, and the human mind gained its full power in the body restored to health and vigor. Since a proper balance was established between mutual rights and duties, the sense of justice was strongly developed and made severe punishments unnecessary. Under such conditions a new race grew up, which was destined to be a model to other nations.

For the first time in ages the natural harmony between man and god was discovered, and the sun warmed a happy race of brothers, animated by common ideals, to whom fear of god was foreign.

For a long time those in power beyond the sea had tried to stem the tide of the age, using every means to destroy what had been gained. Even men of science devoted their superior knowledge to the service of slave culture.

What the monopolist had done in the new land the princes of the old dominion did on a grand scale. To grab lands and murder nations was their aim, hallowed by divine approval. Thus did they seek to force salvation and the spurious doctrine of the priests upon all mankind. In this manner weaker races disappeared before the onslaught of the higher civilization, human sacrifices to the moloch of vilest greed.

The last high-priest of the fetish worshipers tried by an hypocritical union of faith and science to sustain his own power and the rule of kings, but the rotten, worm-eaten element in vain opposed the powerful god of

nature, who was making great headway among the people. As the power and revenues of the priests and kings depended upon the ignorance and credulity of the half-men, they received their death warrant from the unshackled mind. The parasites and maggots did not thrive on the freshly fertilized soil, and vanished from it. Then it was that the ideal state of the free people found imitation there also, and for the first time god's peace rested upon Mars.

Since the abolition of private ownership of public utilities in the new land, the priest-made faith had found much difficulty in maintaining itself even in the old dominion, since the principal sources of income were shut off. The professional servants of god supported themselves scantily by begging from place to place, since they knew no useful art.

Even the high-priest was frequently obliged to sell the sacred implements of the fetish temples in order to keep up appearances. The profitable trade in bones had ceased, and there was no sale for pardons and indulgences. Neither did the blessings of the high-priest produce any large amounts of money. Twice he had pawned his threefold tiara in order to increase the revenues and prevent the collapse. When it went to the money-lender for the third time it was all over with the old god. What science had left of him was torn in shreds by the indignant people. And so there was light here also. The dominion of spiritual tyranny after a thousand years of power came to an end. The magnificent church built with the proceeds of the traffic in pardons, and the palace of the last high-priest, passed into the possession of the people and were given over to science and the god of nature.

In the same halls whence the priesthood had been wont to rule the destinies of nations, the noblest spirits on Mars held their meetings and taught the natural history of creation. Wise men rummaged around in the musty archives and what they ferreted out was not calculated to edify the people. Documents were discovered that exposed the conspiracy of long standing between the priests and unbelievers, for the suppression of liberty and the preservation of private ownership of public utilities. Reports of emissaries, unmasking the most hideous crimes against the people, and laws which nullified all sacred precepts for a money consideration, were found in amazing quantities. In a secluded corner of the palace was discovered the unsullied teachings of the wise master, covered with spider webs and eaten through by moths. This book assuredly was not the foundation on which the government of the priests was built. Everything was found among those who lived here except true religion.

Thousands of dignitaries had here sneered at deity while eating up the savings of the nations. There were devil's advocates, whose duty it was to drag out suits for the beatification of persons, and to employ the most contemptible tricks to smirch the character of the candidates, in order to pile up large bills of costs. Others there were whose business it was to condemn books and write bulls of excommunication, and even some whose sole occupation consisted in falsifying documents to keep the faith in agreement with science. Not a few were spies, who were charged with smelling out secrets at the royal courts and in rich

families, and all of them without exception lived by the sins of others.

After arranging all the books, documents and implements, according to their age and importance, it was unanimously resolved to make the magnificent church a national museum and place the whining high-priest in charge of it, which office he gratefully accepted. The devil's advocate was made custodian of the antiquities and was directed to explain to visitors the significance of the various objects. It was amusing to listen to the cunning graybeard, when he told how many suits he had managed to spin out indefinitely and how much were the proceeds therefrom. He generally concluded his remarks with an expression of regret that the last suit for the beatification of a high dignitary in the new land was cut short by the proclamation of the people, which made it impossible to the advocates of the candidate to send more money, without which no one could be declared a saint.

The high-priest had become childish with age, and could not be prevailed upon to part with an old pair of slippers. They were readily left to him, when the devil's advocate declared they were the same slippers that had been kissed in fervent devotion by thousands of the faithful. They reminded him of his bygone power, and he had become much attached to them. When he died, they, too, were placed in the museum. Among his belongings was found a huge rusty key, a shepherd's staff, and an old signet ring. The key did not fit any lock in the capital city, but the shrewd devil's advocate explained it was the key of heaven, which had become rusty from disuse, since no one had

been admitted to heaven for a hundred years, hell having been found more profitable. The shepherd's staff indicated the former occupation of the high-priest, who once upon a time tended large flocks of sheep. At this remark he winked one eye significantly. Altogether he was a very talkative fellow, and what he did not know did not amount to much.

"He put all the blame on the first high-priest and said the system could maintain itself as long as it did only by the aid of the ignorant people and their kings. Himself and the highest dignitaries had for years been zealous adherents of the god of nature and despised the words of the master as degrading. And now science compelled them all to do homage to those beautiful teachings. The assembled scholars and scientists proclaimed the master to the people as the first and noblest of god-men, and his doctrine as the only true one. The sacred books and revelations of the priests were pronounced to be falsified and placed in the various museums among the antiquities from the age of the half-men, to which were also assigned all the other mongrel achievements of this past age of culture.

"The most glorious day for new-born mankind dawned on Mars when the implements of murder and weapons of war of the old civilization were destroyed. Since private ownership in public utilities and the old god had fallen, they became superfluous. Bear in mind that there were men in those days who took pleasure in utilizing the achievements of science to kill thousands of people in cold blood, and you will readily understand how interesting these antiquities must be to us.

"Among the antiquities are found real praying machines and straps with which people fancied they could please the deity, side by side with corsets for lacing up the body; little knives for paring the finger nails, and others that served to mutilate manhood; stuffed pillows for flat-chested women, and wadding to upholster the consumptive frames of men; golden vessels in which paid priests humbugged the people to believe they changed bread and wine into the body of god, beside machines for slaughtering beasts and making sausages; wooden images that were considered to perform miracles, and amulets to protect from death and the devil; cannons and knives with which men slaughtered one another, and oil with which dying people were doused to facilitate their passage to the life beyond; frame gibbets on which men were legally murdered, and iron cages in which criminals were kept; heavy steel chests in which money and papers were protected from rust and thieves, and rings that were worn in the ears. The stocks and bonds from the boom time which preceded our own age have the greatest fascination for our people, for it was thought by means of them to have enslaved unborn generations. Then there are all the nice judicial opinions and law books of the so-called hair-splitters from the age of shysters. But it would take me too long to enumerate all the ludicrous things. The threefold tiara of the high-priest and the rusty crown of the last king conclude the list of attractions in the national museum.

"It defies description what unnaturalness the man of that period, who looked with contempt upon his ancestors, had developed. He had become one-sided

and was lost in specialties. Thus he thought to be master of one art by forgetting all others. The one knew nothing but how to make buttonholes, while another boasted of his ability to turn justice into a lie. Altogether there was a degree of confusion and absurdity which is positively loathsome to us. The most valuable art was to profit by over-reaching others. Its object was attained if one became a millionaire. To conceal one's thoughts and to lie with a straight face was considered divine, and those who had mastered this art were called diplomats. This degree of perfection was attained only by the servants of the state and the church, who were past masters in it, and were aped with eagerness by all.

"The ancestors of these beings having preferred human flesh to all other food, and worn rings in the nose, were held in due contempt by their descendants, who ate only the flesh of unreasoning brutes, and wore rings in the ears and on their fingers.

"This display of the achievements of this age spoke more eloquently of the decline of those men than all the philosophers living in their day had done.

"For the first time, it was possible to review the past, which was spread out before the eye of man like a boundless plain. The ruins of what had gone before lay exposed to the purified mind, and the god-man knew that the last form was but the link connecting him with the past. He saw that in every period truth had fought a mighty battle and was almost invariably outdone by falsehood. Every shadow that had ever darkened the mind was cast by the creature of the fancy which dominated the particular time and was



considered as a material reality, to vanish as soon as the image itself became untenable. The god of the half-men, too, had grown up with them and ceased to live when they died.

"The infinite in every period was estimated by finite measures, and the ideas concerning its existence and magnitude were conditioned by the duration and forms of thought then prevailing. Both were but the temporary products of mortal mind and gave way to the conceptions of succeeding generations, until they centered and rested in the knowledge of truth. And yet all was perfect in its own period and answered the requirements of the time and of life itself.

"How could it be otherwise? When the spirit first became flesh, the everlasting power disappeared in the visible form and became its servant. The farther man strayed from nature, the more evil he found, until at last nothing but evil remained. Then he became the miscreant, his god the avenger, himself the slave, and god the master. From that point, along the path he had entered, the most abominable contradictions were developed into established science. And before he got through, even the god he worshiped must wade in the unfathomable mire of unreason. Then creation really was a failure, and the father of the universe needed a son to offer in atonement for his own bungling work. And yet he did not mend it. But man from that time forward overrated his position and deemed himself immortal.

"In that manner he lightened the self-imposed burden of slavery, fancying he would find in the life beyond the grave everything in plenty that he had lacked

here below. In this occupation of rummaging through nature in search of the supernatural, he became unnatural himself. How he had degraded himself and the eternal creator! The normal mind shudders at the phantoms of the past and abhors the lie of the extramundane god, since he knows that truth lies hidden only in his own nature.

"The primitive fire worshipers probably never imagined that their successors would dance themselves into bestial delight at sight of a human sacrifice. And yet this custom was practiced during the time of the half-men on Mars to a ridiculous degree, for many ate unleavened bread, imagining that it was the real body of the son of god. Thus progress had not been attained by crowding out nature's laws with a forced culture. The climax of this retrogressive movement, and at the same time its end, was reached when gold was made god. The only possibility left after that was to revert to nature as it was revealed by the light of science, and this result was accomplished with the aid of wise men.

"And yet it was but a step from the self-impregnation of the worm to the origin of man; both were animated by one thought: The preservation and propagation of life. These impulses spring from their own natures, and are justified only by their necessity. From the sun worshipers to those who danced about the golden calf, this is the air that permeates the universe. Upon these impulses human society arose and the church was built, and from them alone spring good and evil.

"They are the Alpha and Omega of our world and lie in ourselves, and from them are all our rights and

duties derived. If we are unfaithful to them, we harm ourselves and injure others. Thus, from the time when the spirit was made flesh down to the period when gold was made god, we behold but a single life, which reveled in its young days in the exuberant strength of the sun worshipers, and in the slavish subserviency to gold passed into the childishness of old age. This point marks the extreme of the degeneration of man, and from the decay of this mass sprang the new form.

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“Since that time nature has rejuvenated the race of men five times, and each creation surpasses the previous one, each figure has become greater and nobler. Natural selection has borne fruit, and the god-man sees with rejoicing that everything emanates from himself and that he alone is the creator of his world. He knows that the god of the half-men was but the creature of their minds, and not the almighty architect of the universe, as they believed. The higher knowledge pronounced the death sentence of that god. With him have fallen heaven and hell, angels and devils, and all have been scattered like dust in the liberated mind, where they had played at hide and seek time out of mind.

“The old doctrine of faith has been replaced by that of evolution, and what the minds of a few had known for thousands of years and men of science had taught despite the persecution of the priests, has become the common property of all. In the lecture rooms of the scientists reference to the six days’ creation and the

atonement of the son provokes smiles even from the children.

"Formerly, creation was turned upside down, and the result had been nothing but disaster. Now the inner man acts upon external creation, and the harmony with nature thus obtained promotes all other endeavors of a mind ever restless for advancement. Whereas formerly the artificial structure of the whole sought to force the individual being into accord with it by destroying its naturalness, the free man now, conversely, acts from within upon the generality of beings, and thus in his own nature reaches the source and climax of that morality for which his ancestors had striven in vain.

"What made the change peculiarly difficult was the degrading position of woman in the old civilization. She had so completely stagnated in the slavery prescribed by the science of divinity, that she was the last to greet with joy the rising sun of liberty. As the grain of wheat cannot grow without intimate contact with the fructifying earth, so the slavery of woman for thousands of years had prevented the birth and growth of the god-man. When woman recognized the new truth, then only was the work completed, and the creative power of man could fall into ideal soil.

"The equal education of both sexes and their equal rights before the law freed woman from the old yoke, and only then was accomplished the development of posterity to the full measure of perfection. The long forgotten and forbidden law of maternal rights was restored to its place, and upon its connection, on equal

terms, with the paternal rights, the new order is founded as on a firm support.

"The first and natural result of the equal position of woman was to sound the knell of that enervating over-fetation, which in previous times had weakened the body and stunted the mind. So it came to pass that within the short span of a hundred years the population decreased largely in number, while the individual life became much stronger. What a perverted theology had sought in vain to accomplish by its teachings for thousands of years was successfully attained in an incredibly short time by natural selection.

"In the beings thus generated, the higher man saw that a sound mind can thrive only in a sound body. So he cared for the body. As excessive irrigation or drought stunts plant and animal life, and even the cultivated tree does not always bear equal fruit, so the new state had taken care to separate bad excrescences from the good, so that the latter might not be spoiled by the rottenness of the former. Hence, the first aim was to place the impulse of propagation in a proper relation to the natural love of one being for another, by keeping the two separate from each other. By this means children of strength were bred, and the ills of earlier hereditary transmission turned into a blessing for the new human race.

"The misery of the half-men had also given rise to the feeling of pity. And yet both misery and pity were only effects of the cruelty of the strong toward the weak, and after the removal of the cause by the new order, there was no longer any reason for either. At present everyone complies with the natural

order of things, and never tries in vain to rescue the individual life from the all-powerful current as was wont to be the case.

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"The ideal state has passed into the flesh and blood of the new race, and laws have become fewer in number as false wants were discarded. The planet itself has changed. The mighty icefields have expanded from the poles toward the middle, and the climate is perceptibly cooler. The number of inhabitants has dropped to a hundred million, and all are living peacefully in the middle country. Neither natural selection nor climatic conditions admit over-fetation, and the race of god-men is slowly nearing dissolution. But since their number is less, the period of individual life has become much extended, and the human mind is more vigorous and clearer of perception.

"The age of iron has been followed by one of natural reason and those whom you have before you were fortunate enough to see the light of day in this period. As one mind dominates us all, so one language suffices for communication, for thought lies bare and words have become superfluous. For a long time agriculture has been the common and principal occupation of the inhabitants of Mars. The complicated machines that the half-man constructed for the purpose of subjecting the forces of nature have become useless, the mighty edifices stand vacant, all the big cities are depopulated and in ruins. Beautiful canals intersect the middle zone, which is habitable, and the power of man has made the planet a paradise.

"The nearer we came to the bosom of nature, the

clearer and better was the structure of creation understood by us. From the ant and the bee, the beaver and the swallow, we learned much since we understand the language of animals. Thus we live peaceably side by side and admire the works of nature, how they arise and decay to make room for new life. We worship only knowledge, and allow no doubts to rise but what we investigate their causes to the bottom. Each one sees in each other man the creator equal to himself, without detracting from his own dignity, since as god and nature are a single unit from which all things emanate, so also is the minutest part of creation animated fully by the spirit of the whole. Each thing is perfect in itself and runs the course prescribed by nature, until it is once more absorbed by the universal mother. The vital force lies in ourselves and does not die when the form falls apart, since both mind and matter are immortal. We recognize our ancestors as our immediate creators, and ourselves as those of our children. The natural force which issues from the influence of the sun carries the power of conditioning and modifying all life, just as the sun is bound to warm whatever comes within his reach. Hence we are but one of the numerous effects springing from the common cause and, therefore, subject to the same laws as everything else.

"If there is a change in the whole, we also are changed, for life, law and religion depend upon climate, as our science very properly teaches. The preservation of life with us has become a very simple matter, since natural selection prevails among us. Moderation is our watchword in all things. We understand

the body in all its entirety and maintain all parts in balance. Disease is but the outgrowth of abnormal conditions, which in turn are determined by heredity and economic wants. Since we throw off the useless burdens of the half-men, we are no longer amenable to their laws. From equal religion, equal knowledge and equal opportunities, only equal rights and duties can issue, which each of us knows.

"In the temple of nature we have found the true religion, and each individual is his own priest. As we emanate from nature and cannot exist without it, so we ultimately are dissolved in it. For we are at one with it, and it is the bed in which we go to rest. Hence we love it as our good mother, for it encompasses us, and we cannot escape its embrace. Nor can the creative power of the father of the worlds be conceived without it. As one spirit animates all things and dwells ever vitalizing in nature, so there is the closest consanguinity of created effects, which we call love. Herein we have solved all problems, have moved mountains, traversed the sea of air, and measured distances. We signaled to you, but you understood us not, because your minds still lie fettered in the primitive god-idea.

"You still think you are the only intelligent beings, and the whole expanse of nature outside of your tiny Earth lies barren. Hearken, then, and wonder, worthy man, for thousands of worlds harbored life ere this little speck of the Earth took form in the everlasting whirl of being. When your planet was still dancing in the universe, a nebulous mass, there was on the moon, which you deem so insignificant, a race of god-



men, which perished as the first worm was born on your Earth. Had it not been your turn, the moon would continue to be habitable to this day. But your Earth deprived her of the life-giving light of the sun, when it began to share the breast of eternal nature, for it was the stronger of the two. But this event helped us to higher life, as it divided the excessive heat, and the coolness was very grateful. But before long we shall both perish, for a new form, a giant in stature, is circling about our orbits, and the fate you guilelessly brought on the moon we shall both suffer together.

"We inhabitants of Mars look forward to the event with perfect equanimity, but you children of the Earth will crawl into your holes in fear and terror, thinking the phenomenon a punishment from your god. The half-men were afraid even of the long-tailed stars that frequently appeared within the range of their vision and harmlessly went on their orbits. But do not fear, the god of nature cannot leave his appointed paths any more than you can, and the time is still far away.

"As the origin and preservation of the heavenly bodies proceed according to eternal laws, so also is their destruction conditioned in nature itself. One to-day, another to-morrow, is the order. Life is not a reward, nor is death a penalty, for both are necessary and come upon us uncalled and unsought. But the spirit is forever yearning to be reunited with its like, and therein alone lies its perfection.

"While we remain among you it shall be our endeavor to plant the seed of the new life on this Earth. We are glad that you are so close to nature. Learn, therefore, to know it right well, and you will there find

hidden the truth for which you are blindly groping to-day. For the laws of eternal justice consist in the one paternal command of the creator, that man shall pursue his own true and substantial happiness; thus only will he live honestly, injure no one, and give to each one his due. Then, down with your false books, your unjust laws, the fences that cut up your land into private patches, and there will be light here also!

"You ask how we came to visit your Earth. Simply enough. We dreamed of a living link between ourselves and the higher animals. It is you, though you call yourselves men. Now our science is complete and we may return home content. Above and about us hovers the infinite deity of nature, and beneath us stands the half-man already nibbling the fruit of the tree of life. Teach your people: 'The kingdom of god lies within yourselves,' and when they understand, then will the eternal light break forth from the darkness, as the rays of the sun from the bank of clouds. Look upward to the stars, and your heart will beat responsive to the god-men when you hear their call:

" 'Let there be Light!' "











